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Assad, Regent exchange views

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Friday received a telephone call from Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, during which they exchanged views on a number of issues of common interest as part of the ongoing consultation between His Majesty King Hussein and President Assad. The Regent and President Assad also discussed the latest developments of the peace process and the outcome of the visit of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to the region. Prince Hassan and the Syrian leader agreed to pursue consultation, coordination and exchange of views with the aim of achieving a just, comprehensive and durable peace.

Israeli soldier killed in Lebanon

MARJAYOUN (AP) — Guerrillas knocked out an Israeli tank with a rocket in South Lebanon Friday and security sources said an Israeli crewman was killed and another wounded. He was the first Israeli military fatality reported in Israel's self-styled "security zone" since the Jewish state and the Palestine Liberation Organisation signed their peace accord Sept. 13. There was no immediate responsibility claim for the 4:15 p.m. (1415 GMT) attack on a road between the villages of Shoumarieh and Alman in the central sector of the Israeli-occupied zone. But the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the rocket was fired at a two-tank Israeli patrol from an area controlled by the Iranian-backed Hizbollah.

16 Palestinian expellees flee camp

MARJ AL ZOHOOR, Lebanon (AFP) — Sixteen Palestinian expellees have fled their camp in South Lebanon to avoid prison when Israel takes them back later this month, their colleagues said. The 16, among 215 Palestinian expellees still left in Lebanon, went to live with relatives in Lebanon or members of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah movement, they said. They allegedly used false documents allowing them refugee status in Lebanon.

Algerian hijacker arrested at Nice

NICE, France (R) — Police overpowered a lone Algerian hijacker who seized a French airliner Friday and demanded to be flown to Libya, officials said. A spokeswoman for the state airline Air France said the hijacker, armed with a knife, was arrested at Nice airport. As the man emerged on top of the aircraft steps, apparently to negotiate, a policeman hiding behind the plane door sent him tumbling with a strong push. More policemen seized him. The hijacker held the two pilots and four stewardesses of the Air France Airbus A320, on a flight from Paris to Nice, for about 90 minutes after letting all 123 passengers disembark. Police sources said the man was identified as an Algerian wanted for armed robbery and drug-trafficking who had been banned from France. They did not name him.

Bhutto in Ankara

ANKARA (AFP) — Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto arrived here Friday for an official visit and talks with Turkish counterpart Tansu Ciller who stressed "the importance" of their meeting as "two women prime ministers of the Islamic world." Ms. Bhutto, in a statement after she arrived at Ankara airport, said she aimed to strengthen the "exemplary" relations between Pakistan and Turkey and would "seek ways to boost" their economic relations to a level "which will reflect (the two countries') true potential (Visit to Iran, page 10).

300 people injured in Safeway fire disaster

200 leave hospital after treatment for mainly smoke inhalation while condition of some others is serious

Initial reports blame electrical fault for blaze

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — About 300 people, including many children, suffered injuries of various degrees and were hospitalised yesterday in one of Jordan's worst fire disasters in recent years.

Most injuries were sustained from smoke inhalation and the resulting stampede that followed the break-out of a fire at the Safeway Department Stores, one of Amman's largest shopping centres.

Over 200 victims were released from hospitals after treatment while 50 others are still hospitalised, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported. About 300 others, out of a total of an estimated 1,200 shoppers, suffered light injuries and were treated on the spot.

A Civil Defence Department spokesman said there were no deaths among the casualties. Minister of Interior Salameh Hamad told Petra that some victims were "in serious condition."

Civil defence sources said initial reports indicated the fire resulted from a short circuit, adding that a special committee



Rescuers bring out children from the smoke-filled Safeway stores after a blaze hit the stores Friday evening. Standing next to the uniformed

police officer is Interior Minister Salameh Hamad (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

tee will be formed to investigate the accident. A spokesman for the store told journalists he was certain the fire started as a result of an electrical fault.

Other sources said the fire erupted when a short circuit occurred in the "ice-man" placed at the entrance of the building to mark the Christmas season.

Firemen and health workers battled the fire for more than an hour. Tens of unconscious victims were rushed into ambulances that sped through thousands of people who crammed

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Friday urged public institutions to have safety precautions and urged legislation that would ensure that public buildings have them in order to protect citizens and their properties.

"It is time to reexamine the preparedness of our institutions and citizens to act effectively to protect national institutions," the Crown Prince said, shortly after a blaze hit the Safeway stores.

Prince Hassan visited the civil defence and policemen who were injured during rescue operations at the stores.

med the streets surrounding the building.

Rescue operations lasted for over three hours, rushing victims to various public and private hospitals around the capital.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, acting Prime Minister Ma'an Abu Nowar, Mr. Hamad and other officials were at the scene of the fire during the rescue operations. Prince Hassan later visited the victims at the hospitals.

Children were separated from their families during the rescue operations as firemen

At the civil defence operation room, he chaired a meeting which included heads of the concerned institutions.

The meeting was attended by Acting Prime Minister Ma'an Abu Nowar and Interior Minister Salameh Hamad.

The Regent asked for an instant investigation into the reasons of the Safeway fire.

The Crown Prince also called at Palestine Hospital, the University of Jordan Hospital, the Specialised Hospital, and Al Bashir Hospital where he inquired after the conditions of those injured in the fire.

King inquires after condition of injured

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein, who is on a private visit to Britain, Friday called His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, at the operation room of the Civil Defence Department to inquire after the health of those injured in the fire.

Prince Hassan informed the King that the victims were in good condition, adding that many of them left the hospitals.

and health workers rushed victims into various hospitals in Amman. The University of Jordan and Palestine hospitals later in the evening called on families who lost their children in the panic to visit them there. Hospital sources said the youngsters were mostly in good condition, according to Petra.

Sources at the University of Jordan, Palestine and Shmeisani hospitals confirmed that there were no deaths.

One survivor told the Jordan Times that lights went off inside the three-storey building before people started shouting

"fire" and rushed to the front gates of the 1,500-square-metre, mostly-closed structure. Khaled Maslamani, who was shopping at the building with his wife and two children when the fire broke out just before 7 p.m., said the automatic doors were jammed and panicked shoppers created a stampede before they broke the gates open with shopping trolleys. "It was chaos. People were pushing and shoving, electric doors would not open," according to Radi Safi, an engineer who was near the entrance.

(Continued on page 3)

Settlers gun down three Palestinians near Hebron

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Jewish settlers Friday shot dead three Palestinians in a wave of tit-for-tat killings preceding Monday's deadline for Israel to start a troop withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres warned earlier that any delay in implementing Palestinian self-rule in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip risked "playing into the hands of the enemies of peace."

Settlers in a car with an Israeli number plate opened fire as they passed a Peugeot van, killing three Palestinians inside, at Kharas, northwest of Hebron in the occupied West Bank, Palestinian sources said.

An anonymous telephone caller told Israel radio that the Palestinians were murdered in revenge for Monday's killings of settlers Mordechai and Shalom Lapid near Hebron.

Hundreds of Palestinians marched in protest during the burial for the three victims in their home village of Tarqumiyah.

Residents of Tarqumiyah said settlers opened fire on a white Peugeot station wagon, killing the driver and two passengers as they drove home from work in Beit Shemesh near Jerusalem.

The victims included two brothers, the driver Saadi Abdul Mahdi Fataftah, 27, and

Mohammad Abdul Mahdi Fataftah, 25, and their cousin, Ishaq Mahmoud Fataftah, 25. Israel Radio said the assailants fired from a passing car near Beit Ullah village next to Tarqumiyah, a farming village of 7,000, 10 kilometres south of Hebron.

It said that a phone caller to the station identifying himself only as Ronen, said the slaying were "in revenge for Mordechai and Shalom Lapid," a father and son killed by Palestinians in Hebron on Tuesday.

A cousin, Taysir Fataftah, said he found their bloody bodies in the car 10 minutes after the shooting.

"I didn't recognise them for a few minutes, their faces were so bloodied," Fataftah said. He said Saadia's hand was still on the gear shift.

Mr. Fataftah said two Arab shepherd boys told him the Israeli gunmen set up a makeshift checkpoint by blocking a main road with their car.

Watching from a nearby olive grove, the boys saw the Israelis stop the Peugeot and shoot the Palestinians at close range through their rolled down window, Mr. Fataftah said.

Another Palestinian came and drove the car away to nearby Beit Ullah to bury the victims, fearing soldiers would confiscate the bodies for autopsy.

Stones were thrown at soldiers who arrived at the scene but they did not respond, witnesses said.

An army statement confirmed the slayings, and said that reports that the gunfire came from "someone riding in a car with yellow (Israeli) licence plates," were being investigated.

A settler and an Israeli policeman were wounded by Palestinian assailants in separate attacks on the Gaza Strip earlier, military sources said.

The settler was in serious condition after he was stabbed by two Palestinian farm workers in a greenhouse at the Gan Or settlement, the sources added.

A third Palestinian worker, the father of one of the assailants, was also stabbed and wounded by his son when he tried to rescue the Israeli settler, witnesses said.

The two victims were hospitalised in Beersheva.

On Thursday, a Palestinian farmer, 55-year-old Khamis Abu Awad, was shot dead in a field near the village of Turmus Ayya, north of Ramallah in the West Bank.

A 16-year-old resident of the Shilo settlement suspected of carrying out the attack was put under house arrest Friday and a second suspect, a man employed as a guard at Shilo, was



An Israeli soldier takes aim at Palestinian protesters in the Gaza Strip (AFP photo)

being held for two days.

Five Palestinians were wounded by gunfire in the north of the West Bank, Palestinian sources said. Four were wounded in

Sanur, a village between Jenin and Nablus, by Palestinians collaborating with Israel.

The fifth was wounded by an Israeli soldier during a demonstration in Nablus.

Arafat, Rabin meet on Sunday

TUNIS (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin will hold "very important" talks Sunday on the eve of a deadline for Israeli troops to start pulling out of Gaza and Jericho, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Friday.

Mr. Christopher said he had brought a message for PLO leader in which Mr. Rabin said "he would be pleased to meet Chairman Arafat in Cairo on Sunday."

"It is very important that the parties reach an agreement on subjects which will enable us to move forward," Mr. Christopher told reporters after one hour of talks with Mr. Arafat here.

Sunday's meeting comes a day before Israeli troops are due to start pulling out from the Gaza Strip and Jericho under the timetable set by the Sept. 13 autonomy accord.

The meeting was first

announced Thursday by PLO chief negotiator Nabil Shaath, but Israel had not officially confirmed it would take place.

Mr. Christopher was visiting Tunis on the last but one leg of a week-long Middle East tour which has already taken him to Israel, Syria, Jordan and Egypt. He flew to Morocco later Friday.

Mr. Arafat said: "We hope that we will overcome all the obstacles."

Under the terms of the PLO-Israel accord on limited autonomy for the Palestinians signed on Sept. 13 Israel is due to start pulling its troops out of the Gaza Strip and Jericho on December 13.

However, the deadline for implementation of the autonomy accord has been threatened by disagreements over control over crossing points between the future autonomous areas and Egypt and Jordan, the release of

(Continued on page 3)

Clinton and Assad set for summit

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria has given a boost to Washington's languishing Middle East peace initiative by agreeing to return to the negotiating table with Israel after a boycott lasting almost three months.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who has been shuttling between Israel and the Arabs, announced the breakthrough in Damascus on Thursday.

With Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation still divided on just how to implement their self-rule deal, it remained unclear whether Israeli forces would start withdrawing from the Gaza Strip and Jericho on Monday as scheduled.

Mr. Christopher emerged from talks with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad on Thursday to announce the resumption of the U.S.-brokered Washington talks as well as a summit in Geneva in mid-January between Mr. Assad and U.S. President Bill Clinton.

The presidential meeting "will help to put in place a vital cornerstone in our efforts to build a comprehensive, just and lasting peace for all the people of the region," Mr. Christopher said, after coaxing Syria and its ally Lebanon back to the talks.

"With the resumption of negotiations in January, I believe that genuine progress can also be made on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks," he told a news conference.

Syria's official press Friday called on the United States to guarantee an Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, saying it was an essential condition for peace in the region.

"It is clear that the summit between President Assad and Clinton in Geneva... will push forward the peace process to achieve a comprehensive and just peace," the official daily Tishrin said.

"The summit reflects Syria's key role in the peace process," it added.

Majali's pledges seen key to House-Cabinet ties

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A healthy relationship between the legislative and executive authorities will develop if the government demonstrates willingness to cooperate with the legislature and implements the pledges Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali made in his speech to parliamentarians before the Lower House of Parliament gave a vote of confidence to his cabinet Wednesday, deputies said.

But if the government maintained "the old way" of keeping the House at bay from the decision-making process, the relationship will be difficult, Irtid Deputy Abdul Raouf Al Rawabdeh said.

In a statement to Jordan Television before he left to Japan Thursday, Dr. Majali said his government's relationship with the legislature would be cooperative.

He said the Cabinet had decided to set up a parliamentary committee that would keep "lawmakers informed of the government's policies."

"We will deal with Parliament with mutual respect and seriousness in order to safeguard the nation's interest... and give further momentum to democracy," Dr. Majali also said in a letter to his Majesty King Hussein, thanking the King for congratulating him for winning the confidence of the House.

Dr. Said, who said his bloc's opposition to the government is based on principles and ideological grounds, said the Islamists would recognise any positive overtures from the government.

"Our opposition is one of principle derived from a belief in ideas and that differs from opposition which is built over certain stands and can change over a minute," said Mr. Said in reference to deputies who indicated opposition to Cabinet in their speeches but then voted in its favour.

He said the front would seek to coordinate with other deputies opposed to the government in order to form a stronger parliamentary opposition bloc.

The IAF was the only parliamentary bloc that took a united stand on the government of Dr. Majali, with all

its members, except for one who did not attend the session, withholding confidence.

While Dr. Said attributed the different voting pattern of other blocs to their "confusion and lack of commitment" since they do not represent one homogeneous political ideology, Mr. Rawabdeh said no one should criticise members of other blocs for not taking a unified position.

"(The blocs) do not represent political parties. On a major political issue it is normal that (each of their members) take his own stand," said Mr. Rawabdeh, who withheld confidence from the Cabinet of Dr. Majali.

Deputy Aref Bataineh of

(Continued on page 3)

1948 refugees — forgotten in the frenzy of autonomy

By Jack Redden
Reuter

AMMAN — Palestinians, driven from the infant Israeli state 45 years ago and never integrated in neighbouring lands, sustained their dreams of going home on Arab promises and United Nations resolutions.

The Israeli-PLO peace accord has now raised the hopes of those from the West Bank or Gaza Strip that Israel captured in 1967. But the future of those original 1948 refugees looks bleaker than ever.

"We did not leave our country willingly and if they let us return, we would return tomorrow," vegetable seller Mustapha Darwish said in the Amman refugee camp of Jabal Al Hussein. "But it is hopeless."

Under the accord Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) signed in September, there cannot be even a discussion of the 1948 refugees for another two years.

Darwish was 13 years old when his parents, five brothers and a sister fled Lid, Israel's Lod, for the wooded slopes that became the refugee camp. Now it is a congested, rundown area enveloped by Amman's expansion.

The accord, far less than anything Palestinians had demanded over the years, provides only for limited self-rule starting in the West Bank town of Jericho and the Gaza Strip.

After two years, and within five, a final settlement is to be reached. The most intractable problems, such as the future of Jerusalem and the demand of 1948 refugees to return, will only be tackled in that last stage.

"It might be possible for them, at a certain stage of the self-rule period, to be admitted to the occupied territories after the (1967) displaced persons return," said Mahmoud Abbas, known as Abu Mazen, who signed the peace accord with Israel.

"But this is a matter which needs more time to be worked out," Mr. Abbas, himself a 1948 refugee, said in the PLO headquarters of Tunis.

Since Israel shows little desire to allow a mass return of even 1967 refugees to the occupied territories, no one expects Israel to drop its traditional refusal to contemplate a return of Arabs to their homes inside what is now the Jewish state.

The number of Palestinians who lost their homes in today's Israel, fed by birth rates as high as Jordan's 3.5 per cent annual growth, are immense.

UNRWA, the United Nations body established to help the 1948 refugees, lists 1,072,561 in Jordan, 603,380 in the Gaza Strip, 479,023 in the West Bank, 528,176 in Lebanon and 314,039 in Syria.

Their conditions vary greatly. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip they are among other Palestinians, in Lebanon and Syria there has been almost no integration with the local population.

In Jordan, their status has been in between. They received citizenship but tensions between original Jordanians and Palestinians, who may now be the majority, flare occasionally.

"I still have the same ideas," said Hussein Al Ramahi, an engineer who moved his family from Zarqa refugee camp five years ago to a middle class home in Amman.

"It's not going to change my thoughts. I still believe I have to go back to Palestine," said the 37-year-old man who considers home to be the 50 hectares his father owned on the coastal plain outside Tel Aviv.

Announcement that the PLO had signed an accord that ignored the 1948 refugees was initially met with anger. But outbursts by Jordanian nationalists questioning the loyalty of Palestinians pushed the refugees back to hoping the PLO would help.

Now they are waiting, unclear if their fate will ever be

discussed and increasingly sceptical the limited autonomy Israel is offering will satisfy other Palestinians.

Despite decades of Arab calls for the "liberation" of Palestine and U.N. resolution 194 demanding the right of return or compensation for the 1948 refugees, the PLO's willingness to settle for less was apparent long before September.

"This should have been known for a long time. Since 1988 the Palestinian peace initiative was talking about U.N. Resolutions 242 (dealing with 1967) rather than other problems," said Ibrahim Abu Ayash, a member of the PLO Central Council.

"People did not pay much attention to that but when something was put on paper and signed they started to shout," he said in his Amman office.

In the crowded refugee camps, residents maintain they will accept nothing less than return to the family homes. Suggestions of compensation draw derisive comments about "selling your country."

"The PLO leadership has betrayed the people," said a bearded 49-year-old man who had fought for PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement. "Israel did not give us one per cent of our rights."

Refugee associations, often based on specific 1948 villages, meet regularly and publish records of what happened nearly a half century ago. A recent increase in publishing reflects a realisation that the original generation is disappearing.

"They have started to realise setting here is going to be a fact and there is a movement among refugees in the camps to resist the idea," said Hisham Al Farr, a 28-year-old whose parents came from Jaffa.

Mr. Farr, sitting by his mother in a cramped house in Jabal Al Hussein camp, said without hesitation that he expected his eight-month-old daughter to spend her life in Jordan.

Gunmen spray Cairo cinema; policeman killed, many hurt

CAIRO (Agencies) — Gunmen opened fire on a cinema in a Cairo suburb Thursday night as crowds left after films, killing a policeman on guard outside and wounding six other people.

The gunfire shattered the glass front of the cinema Magda in the industrial suburb of Helwan, 25 kilometres south of the centre in Cairo. The blood of the dead policeman stained the pavement.

The cinema and the adjacent Al Marwa have been showing films that are part of the Cairo International Film Festival, an annual event condemned by Muslim fundamentalists because it includes foreign films with more explicit sex scenes than are usually allowed in Egypt.

Interior Minister Hassan Al Alfi blamed the attack on Muslim militants, who have been waging a campaign of violence to overthrow the government and nearly killed the prime minister with a remote-controlled bomb last month.

The ministry quoted General Alfi as saying after visiting the wounded in hospital: "Opening fire at random in this cowardly way shows that these groups have reached the point of despair and collapse after the heavy blows which the security forces have directed against them in the past few days."

The attackers struck at midnight, looting smoke bombs and firing from two cars as people began leaving the adjacent cinemas.

The policeman died shortly after being taken to hospital, and two other people were in serious condition.

Police captured a suspect at a road block shortly afterwards, wounding him when he refused to stop, unconfirmed reports in the press said. They found sketches of the cinemas on him and details of how many policemen would be on duty outside.

The attackers were disguised on military uniforms.

The owner of the cinemas, the Magda and Al Marwa, said the toll could have been higher but the programme was running late and people had only just started leaving.

Police have rounded up more than 1,200 suspects since the attack on Prime Minister Atef Sedki on Nov. 25, including nine alleged members of the Jihad (holy struggle) group accused of direct involvement in the bombing.

A police officer at the scene said the policeman who died, Hassan Izzat Tewfik, was hit by so many bullets that his body was barely recognisable.

Officers said they believed there had been four gunmen, all in their late teens or early twenties, and that two had

already been caught. Witnesses said the gunmen simply walked up to the front of the cinema and opened fire before running away.

The interior ministry said the attackers fled in two cars.

Gen. Alfi ordered an immediate reward of 500 pounds (\$150) to be given to a police detective who happened to be at the cinema and fired back at the attackers with his pistol, the ministry said.

The suggestion that militants were responsible is plausible but does not fit the pattern of operation of the most active militant movements, Jihad and Al Gamaa Al Islamiya (Islamic Group).

Muslim fundamentalists regard even Arab films, which avoid explicit sex, as sinful because they show trivial love affairs, drinking and other behaviour deemed immoral. Militants have fire-bombed several video stores in recent years.

Neither Jihad nor the Gamaa are known to have attacked a cinema and both have denied targeting innocent civilians.

Jihad's preferred tactics are to assassinate top government and military figures. The Gamaa murders police officers and has devastated Egypt's tourist industry with gun and bomb attacks on foreigners.

Ashrawi declines top PLO post, wants to defend human rights

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian peace delegation, said Friday she has refused any position in a future Palestinian government because she is interested in defending human rights.

"I do not want to have any official position, not as ambassador in Washington and not as minister of anything, because I am busy in forming a committee for human rights," Dr. Ashrawi told the Associated Press.

Dr. Ashrawi had been expected to serve as the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) envoy in the American capital.

Dr. Ashrawi and other Palestinian experts from all over the world are working on establishing laws that would allow Palestinians to sue the government if it breaches human rights.

"We want to guarantee that individuals have the basic human rights," Dr. Ashrawi said. A three days conference on human rights is underway in Arab East Jerusalem to encourage the PLO to respect human rights.

Many Palestinians are worried that the future Palestinian authority would be like other nondemocratic Arab countries and Yasser Arafat will govern by decree.

His recent appointments of political leaders for the territories and attempts to keep all financial and decision-making bodies under his direct control have heightened concerns that an autocracy was forming.

Mr. Arafat's associate recently criticised the PLO chief for making decisions without consulting them, especially concerning the negotiations on autonomy.

The Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Gaza Strip and the Jericho region on the West Bank is due to start Monday, with Palestinians beginning to

run their own affairs by next April.

Dr. Ashrawi would not specifically criticise Mr. Arafat on the issue of human rights, noting he issued a decree supporting political pluralism and basic human rights.

But she and other top negotiators also threatened to resign last August, accusing Mr. Arafat of making decisions without consulting them.

At the Jerusalem conference Palestinian human rights activists, who have challenged Israel's army in the occupied territories since 1967, are preparing to take on a possible new adversary.

"We cannot be schizophrenic. We cannot be talking, correcting the Israelis for the last 26 years and when it comes to the Palestinians say it will be perfect," lawyer Raji Sourani said on Thursday.

He was addressing about 60 rights activists.

"We have signs that are not so encouraging. We have stood against Israelis and I do not think we will be less stubborn (with the PLO) but in a positive way, helping, suggesting, advising," Mr. Sourani said.

Dozens of local rights groups have been a vital part of the Palestinian nationalist struggle, constantly nagging Israel's army by winning international exposure for human rights abuses by Israeli troops during the Palestinian uprising.

Now they are worried the PLO might take up where Israel's army leaves off if it is not sufficiently monitored.

Activists say the PLO has not shown enough concern for human rights issues and that the self-rule agreement is vague and leaves large loopholes for Israel's army and Palestinian police to jump through.

"The duplication of authority in many areas is a tremendous programme," Fatah Azzam, chairman of the Al Haq legal rights group



Hanan Ashrawi

told Reuters. "It is not clear who will enforce what."

Israel and the PLO are still negotiating the powers of the Palestinian police. The legislative powers of the Palestinian interim authority, due to take control of Gaza and Jericho in April, are also left wide open.

Activists who travelled to PLO headquarters in Tunis recently and put their concerns to Chairman Arafat say he listened positively to their concerns.

But many are afraid the PLO, like many guerrilla movements before it, will find it tough to adopt open, accountable government and to eventually yield power in elections.

Some even say international support for the agreement might take pressure off PLO leaders to respect human rights.

"There is such support for the peace process that it could actually affect international readiness to support non-governmental efforts to protect human rights," Mr. Azzam said.

The declaration of principles Israel and the PLO signed in September specifies elections to choose a Palestinian authority next year, but makes no references to human rights.

Delegates said the conference, opened by former chief Palestinian negotiator Haidar Abdul Shafi, was a preliminary meeting which could lead to the formation of an umbrella group to monitor the Israeli army, the PLO-run police and fundamentalists opposed to the agreement.

NEWS IN BRIEF

One in five settlers ready to shoot

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Nearly one in every five Israeli settlers is prepared to use his gun against the Palestinian police, according to an opinion poll in Friday's Yediot Aharanot newspaper. Seventeen per cent of the 120,000 Jewish colonists on the West Bank and Gaza "will use firearms against any attempt at arrest by Palestinian police," The Dahal Institute found that 32 per cent would oppose arrest by force but without using a gun and 39 per cent of the settlers would obey the new police. Twelve per cent expressed no opinion in the survey of 418 settlers carried out Tuesday and Wednesday. The margin of error was four per cent. The armed Palestinian force, which Israel says can be 15,000 strong, is to maintain order in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho as Israel pulls troops out under the Sept. 13 autonomy agreement. No date has been announced for the Palestinians to begin patrols.

Tunisian fundamentalist on hunger strike

BREST, France (AFP) — A Tunisian Islamic fundamentalist under house arrest here went on hunger strike Thursday to protest a police raid on his home in the Paris area, he said on Friday. Salah Karker, a leader of the Tunisian fundamentalist movement Al Nahda, said police searched his flat at Epinay-sur-Seine, north of Paris, for 12 hours. "They took my books and all my letters. I am only a political opponent. I am not a thief, a murderer or a drug trafficker. A hunger strike is the only way I can protest." During the raid on Wednesday, French police questioned Mr. Karker's wife, Samira Labidi. They also swooped on the homes of 11 other alleged Tunisian Islamic fundamentalists in the Paris area and eastern France. Police said the raids were carried out at the request of a Tunisian examining magistrate who issued an international warrant asking France to probe "the possibility that criminal gangs" were planning to "attack persons or property" in France. A political refugee since 1987, father-of-six Karker was arrested last Oct. 30 at Epinay, and issued with a deportation order for his "active support for a terrorist movement in France and in other European countries." He was placed under house arrest pending his appeal against deportation.

Moroccan gets death for raping boy

RABAT (R) — A policeman was sentenced to death in Morocco for raping young boys in handcuffs and 10 accomplices were jailed for participating in sex orgies. Lawyers said Bouchaib Arbad was sentenced on Thursday by a court in Al Jadida 90 kilometres southwest of Casablanca. He was also ordered to pay 30,000 dirhams (\$3,150) to the customs administration for trafficking in alcoholic beverages. The court handed sentences ranging from four months to 10 years on the 10 accomplices, one of them another policeman. They were further ordered to pay fines ranging from 10,000 to 66,000 dirhams (\$1,050 to \$6,950). The 10 were convicted of involvement in orgies organised by Mr. Arbad at his home in the nearby town of Azemmour, trafficking in alcoholic beverages and pornographic videos. Mr. Arbad was arrested in Azemmour on April 30 following complaints from the parents of two young boys who said they had been raped by the accused while photographs were being taken. The court was told 24 boys had been victimised by Mr. Arbad who handcuffed or bound some of them. It is the second death sentence passed on a policeman this year for sexual crimes. Chief Police Commissioner Mustapha Tabet was sentenced to death by a Casablanca court on March 15 and executed by firing squad on Aug. 9. Tabet was convicted of multiple rape during orgies in a Casablanca flat which involved 518 women over a period of three years. He filmed the sessions with hidden video cameras.

Iranian grand ayatollah dies

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Reza Golpayegani, one of the most senior Shi'ite Muslim clerics, died Thursday evening at the age of 96. Iranian radios and television ran sombre music and verses from the Koran in honour of the ayatollah, who was taken from the holy city of Qom to Tehran's Martyr Rajaei hospital on Monday night with a respiratory infection. "Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani, the leader of Shi'ite Muslims all over the world, has gone to heaven," Tehran Radio said. Ayatollah Golpayegani was a close friend of Iran's late revolutionary leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Many Shi'ite Muslims considered him the foremost marja taqlid — the highest rank of the Shi'ite clergy which literally means "the source of imitation" — since the death in August 1992 of Grand Ayatollah Abol Qasem Al Khoei in Najaf in Iraq. Ayatollah Golpayegani avoided direct involvement in politics although he supported the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Rights report says abuses continue in Turkey

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Kurdish rebellion led to "appalling" human rights abuses in Turkey in 1993, according to the new Human Rights Watch World Report, released Thursday. The report said that security forces shot and killed civilians in house raids and used torture as an interrogation technique. The guerrilla war started by the separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) escalated and the report said "support for the PKK in southeast Turkey appeared to grow rather than to decline. Unfortunately the government chose to deal with these problems by shooting and killing suspected members of extremist groups in violation of international agreements and standards." A large number of suspects were killed in raids described as shootouts by authorities but in which security forces were rarely killed or wounded "creating a strong presumption that the suspects were deliberately executed," it said. "Contrary to international agreements," 38 demonstrators sympathetic to the Kurdish rebellion were shot by police in four cities in southeast Turkey, it added. The report said that "cruel torture of suspects of both ordinary and political crimes continued as a routine part of their interrogation by police." Eighteen suspects died in suspicious circumstances in custody.

Exodus of foreigners from Algeria picks up after killings

ALGIERS (AFP) — The exodus of foreigners fleeing death threats from militants accelerated Friday after Russia, the United States and France moved to reduce the number of their nationals in Algeria.

Airlines said flights to Europe were fully booked until Jan. 10, with many foreigners, notably French, planning to leave the country after the start of Christmas school holidays on Dec. 15.

The U.S. State Department late Thursday urged Americans to leave Algeria unless they had compelling reasons to remain there and said U.S. embassy staff was being cut back to a minimum for security reasons.

It also issued a travel warning urging Americans not to travel to Algeria. Russia also announced Thursday that it was evacuating the families of embassy and trade centre staff and France, the former colonial power, said it was cutting back on its 600 government personnel here.

Even before the official moves, foreigners had begun leaving the country since militants trying to topple the government and set up a fundamentalist state began targeting foreigners three months ago.

Eleven foreigners have been killed since September, four of them since the Dec. 1 expiration of a deadline set by the militants for expatriates to quit the country or face death.

Two Russian military instructors and a Russian woman married to an Algerian were among those murdered.

There are many Russian military instructors in Algeria, along with doctors and technical staff, and many Algerians who studied in the old Soviet Union brought back Russian spouses.

The Russian embassy has told nationals across the country to stand by for repatriation. The wives and children of employees at the consulate at Annaba in eastern Algeria are being evacuated. And schools for Russian children are to close temporarily.

The United States has over the past year already repatriated the families of some diplomats, and closed the American school and the consulate in Oran. But the cultural centre in the relatively well protected Hydra

district of the capital is carrying on normally. Its clients are mainly Algerians wanting to improve their English.

There are an estimated 300 Americans in Algeria, according to unofficial figures. Most are in the oil industry, based in the far south where U.S. firms are working a dozen prospecting concessions in the Sahara Desert in cooperation with the Algerian state oil and natural gas company Sonatrach.

Bechtel is renovating liquid gas pipelines at a plant in Arzew in western Algeria. British technician Malcolm David Vincent, working for Pullmann Kellogg at the same plant, was murdered there on Tuesday.

Other American firms in the country include Anadarko, Phillips, Mobil, Arco, Pecten and Occidental.

France, the most prominent foreign presence here, voiced its concern at the situation and urged the utmost vigilance by French nationals.

Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, using measured diplomatic tones, said Thursday that a "falling back" rather than a "withdrawal" of some expatriates and children from Algeria was being planned.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDER

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77311-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:30	Ph Et Hieron
17:41	L'Ecole Des Fais
18:30	Beaumanboir
19:00	News in French
19:15	Ushania
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	The Family Boys
21:00	Da Best's On
21:30	Prospective
22:00	News in English
22:30	Feature Film: "On The Streets of LA"
PRAYER TIMES	
04:58	Fajr
06:20	(Sunrise) Dhuha
11:28	Dhuhr
14:13	"Asr
16:37	Maghrib
17:59	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifish, Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624990	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrence Church Tel. 22366	

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 625441	
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 625453	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 652526	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 664195	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 623324, 654932	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be sunny and warm with clouds appearing at different altitudes, and winds will be southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, in will be northerly moderate and sea calm.	
Min/Max. temp.	
Amman	7 / 15
Aqaba	13 / 24
Deserts	4 / 20
Jordan Valley	12 / 24
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 19, Aqaba 23, Humidity readings:	

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Jamil Tarif	794710
Dr. Abbas Al Fakim	885446
Dr. Fayer Al Dabbas	759155
Dr. Yousof Rashid	896300
Firas pharmacy	661912
Ferdows pharmacy	778336
Al Amana pharmacy	637055
Natroski pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shmeissal pharmacy	637660
Najib pharmacy	847632
JERICO:	
Dr. Fayer Al Qadi	248743
Al Qada Pharmacy	(-)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Hisham Hyass	962440
Khalifah pharmacy	985417

EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	
Civil Defence Department	671111
Civil Defence Emergency	630341
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896330
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	605800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	661176
Complaints	871467
Amman Municipality	787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Abdull Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	771111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100

JORDAN ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY ... 815615	
Electric Power Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-33200
Queen Alia Int. Airport	08-33200
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussien Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalifah Maternity, J. Amn.	642811/6
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn.	642412/2
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Malhas, J. Amman	836140
Palestine, Shmeissal	664171/4
Shmeissal Hospital	669131
University Hospital	845845
Al-Mustashir Hospital	667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali	665127/7
Al-Ahli, Abdali	664164/6
Italian, Al-Mahajreen	777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Astradieh	775111/26
Army, Marjeh	891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital	

Udwan discusses tourism with American academics

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Tourism Mohammad Affash Al Udwan Friday briefed an American delegation comprising 140 students and teachers from Brigham Young University in the U.S. State of Utah on Jordan's democratic experience.

Speaking at a meeting with the delegation, Dr. Udwan said Jordan seeks a just and comprehensive peace which ensures the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and accepted by future generations.

Dr. Udwan said a just and comprehensive peace will have its political and social reflections on the region and will contribute to security and stability. This in turn, he said, will have positive effects on the tourism sector in the whole region in general and in Jordan in particular in view of Jordan's wealth of historical, cultural and archaeological places.

Dr. Udwan said the tourism sector in Jordan is one of the main pillars of the Jordanian economy and that it is one of the major sources for hard currency.

The delegation is on a six-day visit to Jordan and is expected to tour archaeological sites and tourist attractions. The delegation is accompanied by the Brigham University Jerusalem-based Director of the Near Eastern Studies Centre Keat Brown and Professor of the Near Eastern Studies at the Centre Nafez Nazal.

The meeting was attended by Director General of the Antiquities Department Safwan Al Tal and senior ministry officials.

Majali's pledges seen key

(Continued from page 1)

the 22-member Progressive Democratic Coalition (PDC) said the different stands members of the bloc took do not reflect a division in the front because the voting pattern was agreed upon.

"We agreed on how each member of the bloc would vote," said Dr. Bataineh. Some members of the PDC backed the government, others opposed it and some abstained.

The Jordanian National Front (JNF) left its eight members to take his own decision and so did the six-member independent bloc.

While Deputy Rawabdeh said the outcome of the voting session were not surprising, Dr. Said said he was surprised by the "increase in the number of deputies who supported the government, claiming the government gained extra votes after negotiations with some deputies.

Observers say these negotiations and other political calculations could account for the shift in the position of some deputies who severely criticised the government in their speeches but voted in its favour.

Some deputies said the government had shown disrespect for the legislature and questioned its ability to deal with the challenges facing the country but voted in its favour when a vote was taken.

Deputies who spoke to be Jordan Times dismissed suggestions that the government would have a narrow and fragile mandate because it won the confidence of 41 deputies only.

"A confidence is a confidence," said Mr. Rawabdeh. "Things are evaluated by the results," said Dr. Bataineh.

Others, however, say the government will have a difficult time dealing with the legislature due to the limited number of deputies who support it.

The Cabinet won the lowest number of votes among all cabinets who asked for the confidence of the House since 1989.

The government of Mudhar Badran won 65 votes, Sharif Zeid won 47 votes, and the government of Taher Al Masri, current speaker of the House, won 47 votes. Mr. Masri's government, however, was opposed by 31 deputies, compared to the 29 who withheld confidence from the Cabinet of Mr. Majali.

Following are the 41 deputies who voted in favour of the government, Wednesday:

1. Jamal Al Khreishah
2. Mohammad Al Zaban
3. Salem Zawaydeh
4. Mohammad Njadat
5. Abdullah Akin Ershideh
6. Abdul Baqi Jammo
7. Mohammad Abu Oleim
8. Rafeh Al Sa'ud
9. Hamad Abu Jamous
10. Mohammad Al Dueih
11. Mohammad Al Huneiti
12. Khaled Al Ajameh
13. Mifteh Al Lawzi
14. Abdul Hafez Shakhaneh
15. Abdul Majid Al Aqtash
16. Samih Al Farah
17. Abdul Majid Azzam
18. Aref Bataineh
19. Nader Abdul Sha'ar
20. Mifteh Al Rahimi
21. Ahmad Al Qudah
22. Sa'ad Sour
23. Nawaf Al Qadi
24. Fayyad Jarar
25. Taha Al Hababeh
26. Farah Al Rabadi
27. Fawwaz Al Zu'bi
28. Ibrahim Samara
29. Hatem Al Ghazwi
30. Nader Thunheir
31. Ali Al Shatti
32. Hashem Al Dabbas
33. Abdullah Ensour
34. Samir Kawa
35. Fawzi Tuainah
36. Mansour Ben Tarif
37. Hani Hijazi
38. Awad Khleifat
39. Abdul Karim Al Kabariti
40. Tawfiq Khreishah
41. Abdul Hadi Majali.

Those who voted against were:

1. Abdul Aziz Jabr
2. Abdul Mun'em Abu Zant
3. Hameez Mansour
4. Ibrahim Kilani
5. Ali Abdul Raghbeh
6. Toniaj Faisal
7. Khalid Hadadin
8. Hammam Sa'ed
9. Ahmad Al Kofahi
10. Saleh Sha'wath
11. Abdul Raouf Al Rawabdeh
12. Abdul Razzaq Tubcishat
13. Abdul Rahim Ektour
14. Suleiman Al Sa'd
15. Deifallah Al Monani
16. Mohammad Al Oweida
17. Mustafa Shneikat
18. Ahmad Hweimeil
19. Ahmad Kasasbeh
20. Jamil Al Eishoush
21. Samir Hahashneh
22. Badr Riyati
23. Mohammad Al Haj
24. Deib Anis
25. Bassam Haddadin
26. Abdul Karim Al Dughmi
27. Mohammad Daoudieh
28. Abdullah Akaleh
29. Bassam Emoush.

The following abstained:

1. Taher Al Masri
2. Anwar Hadid
3. Abed Musa Al Nahar
4. Munir Subar
5. Saleh Irshideat
6. Talal Obeidat
7. Ibrahim Shehdeh
8. Jamal Sarairah
9. Nazih Ammarin

(Deputy Deib Abdullah Khatat was absent).

300 injured in Safeway blaze

(Continued from page 1)

Once again the fire broke out. Thousands of people frequent the Safeway every day, and usually Fridays are the store's busiest days.

Over a 1,000 people were reported to have been trapped at the limestone building when the fire erupted, according to various counts, with one informed source putting the actual figure at 1,200.

Victims, who included firemen and policemen, were carried to public as well as private hospitals by civil defence, military medical services and civilian cars as police helicopters moved in supplies to rescue workers.

While many citizens rushed to help the civil defence men, others hindered the rescue operations by jamming the alleys and streets leading to the windowless building, located in the Shmeisani area.

The extent of the damage could not be immediately known but Safeway manager Azzam Al Masri told journalists the store would be back in operation in a week.

"The cost is the last thing we think of," said Mr. Masri, whose family bought the store from subsidiary company of the collapsed Petra Bank at a cost of JD 5 million about two years ago. The Masris developed the department store into one of the most successful business ventures in Jordan.

The fire was the largest in Amman since 1992 when flames destroyed parts of the Inter-Continental Hotel, killing one Iraqi citizen who was trapped in an elevator and lightly injuring about 10 others.

Arafat, Rabin

(Continued from page 1)

Palestinian prisoners and the size of the future Jericho area.

Referring to the deadline, Mr. Arafat said: "We hope we will be able to implement it accurately and on the same date that it was decided."

Israel proposes yielding 25 square kilometres of land in the Jericho area.



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali (second from left) Thursday receives World Bank Director Atillah Karaomanoglu (second from right) in Amman.

World Bank to provide \$7m for agricultural marketing

By P.V. Vivekanand

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The World Bank is working on a \$7 million aid package for Jordan's private agricultural sector to improve its marketing methods and expand its scope of sales, official sources said Friday.

The sources, reporting on the visit of World Bank Managing Director Atillah Karaomanoglu, also said the bank was looking into the Kingdom's water sector to devise methods to improve efficiency.

According to the sources, who preferred anonymity, Mr. Karaomanoglu was seeking to "familiarise himself with Jordan's economy" and the Kingdom's performance in implementing the economic restructuring programme prescribed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Mr. Karaomanoglu told reporters after a meeting with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Planning Minister Ziad Fariz on Thursday that he was satisfied with the Kingdom's adherence to the programme, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

Jordan has clearly dedicated its efforts in the context of this programme towards improving the socio-economic conditions of its people, he said, calling on international bodies to extend help to the Kingdom, Petra reported.

He also promised that the World Bank, in coordination with other international organisations, will help Jordan hope with its economic problems.

The World Bank official also expressed appreciation of Jordan's role in the Middle East peace process and noted that the Kingdom was crucial to the stability of the region, Petra said.

The sources told the Jordan Times Mr. Karaomanoglu's talks here were of a general nature, noting that he was not directly involved in the nitty-gritty details of World Bank in Jordan or anywhere else.

"The World Bank is interested in helping Jordan alleviate the social costs of

the economic restructuring programme," and Mr. Karaomanoglu wanted to have a firsthand look at things," said one senior source.

The World Bank official also reviewed "regional projects" in the context of the Arab-Israeli peace process, added the source without offering details.

In a bilateral context, the source said, the two main areas the World Bank is interested in now are agricultural and water in Jordan.

"The World Bank is putting together a package of \$7 million grant which will go direct to the private sector in agriculture to improve their marketing methods and seek new market outlets," said the source.

The grant will be followed by soft loans of as yet unspecified amounts to consolidate the programme, the source added.

Mr. Karaomanoglu was quoted as saying in an address at the World Affairs Council Thursday that Jordan could become "the Singapore of the Middle East" in the next 10 years.

In a report of the press, Al Dustour newspaper also said that the World Bank official told his audience that Jordan "possesses all the required skilled manpower to deal with economic matters" and that the Kingdom had been "very efficiently" benefiting from the World Bank's assistance in "various fields."

In the water sector, the World Bank is looking into means to improve the use of the scarce commodity, said the source.

One of the main hurdles that Jordan faces in this context is continued subsidies which lead to less than two per cent of actual cost of water reflected on the farmers, according to the source.

The source said the World Bank, by definition of its mandate, would not be "pressuring Jordan" to cut the subsidies but looking into means to improving the efficiency of water use in terms of better-yield, cost-effective

agricultural patterns.

"It is in the government's own interest to ensure that the actual cost of water is better reflected in the costs of the farmers rather than the treasury," said the source.

This is a pressing issue, said the source, since there is no sense in government pumping free water and farmers contributing little to the water costs and doing little to increase their contribution to the economy by shifting farming patterns.

An IMF delegation is also visiting Jordan and this team is expected to press the government to cut some of the subsidies for water.

Officials, anxious to avert problems with consumers, have been resisting IMF pressure to cut water subsidies since 1989. But they agree that there is an urgent need to address the problem.

"It cannot be allowed to continue if only because this is a serious drain in national resources and setback to the shifting priorities in the agriculture sector," said a senior government official.

The net picture in the agriculture sector, said the source, is that "the farmers have developed a careless attitude towards water since they pay less than two per cent of the actual cost and this has to change."

"They have to realise that water is a precious commodity, and not something that can be taken for granted as being pumped into their lands at government costs," said the source.

There should be more focus on low-water consuming, high-cost crops rather than the present, state-funded high-water consuming, low-cost crops, the source said, citing bananas, which require large amounts of water but fetch relatively low prices in the market.

The senior government official agreed, "Unless we prod the agriculture sector into understanding and accepting the real cost of farming, including that of water, then there is little hope that Jordan will achieve its long-term goals in this sector."

Majali starts Japan visit

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali arrives in Tokyo this morning on an eight-day visit during which he will discuss Jordanian-Japanese relations and the Middle East peace process.

Dr. Majali, who is accompanied by Information Minister Jawad Anani, will also attend a U.N. meeting. Dr. Majali was carrying messages from His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan to Emperor Akihito and Crown Prince Naruhito on Jordanian-Japanese relations.

Dr. Majali, who is also minister of defence and foreign affairs, will meet with Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa, Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata and other senior officials for discussions on the Middle East peace process as well as Jordanian-Japanese relations.

Japan is an active player in the Middle East peace process. It chairs the multilateral working group on the environment. Tokyo is expected to help Jordan, Egypt and Israel to set up a pollution data gathering and control network after the working group adopted a decision

last month to go ahead with the project.

Also reviewed during the Jordanian-Japanese discussions this week will be Tokyo's financial assistance to Amman and explore chances for the early release of an \$80 million to match a World Bank loan already granted to the Kingdom to develop its energy sector on a bilateral level.

Diplomats have said that an agreement in principle had been taken to release the amount, but specifics had to be worked out in coordination among the various government agencies and the finance ministry.

Japan, which is also a member of the regional working group on water, is financing two pilot projects near the Dead Sea to explore possibilities of desalination as a means to address part of Jordan's water problems.

Japanese-Jordanian relations are traditionally strong. Tokyo extended \$750 million in soft loans to Jordan in the late 1980s and early 1990s, particularly to help the Kingdom cope with the negative effects of the Gulf crisis of 1990-91.

Dr. Majali left Amman Thursday and was making a stop over in Kuala Lumpur



Abdul Salam Majali Friday before proceeding to Tokyo.

In departure comments, Dr. Majali, who has served as president of the University of Amman and advisor to the King on higher education, said he would seek to set up a centre in Amman for training world leaders under the auspices of the United Nations University.

The centre, he said, will train students who show promises in leadership skills and make it possible for them to assume leadership positions in their respective countries after the training.

Dr. Majali said he had already made the proposal and would follow it up during this week's meetings in Tokyo.



Prince Raad Ben Zeid (second from right) and Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas (left) Thursday at the opening of the Franco-Jordanian medical conference (Petra photo).

French, Jordanian specialists discuss medical cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — Chief Chamberlain Prince Raad Ben Zeid has called for increased efforts towards ensuring continued medical training in Jordan in cooperation with France and other nations.

Addressing the opening ceremony of a meeting organised by the Franco-Jordanian Medical Society in Amman, Prince Raad said that the major achievements in the Jordanian medical field ought to receive support efforts for further accomplishments, particularly through the continued training of medical personnel in order to cater to the modern developments.

"Continued medical training should be given due priority in Jordan, Prince Raad said.

His call echoed by Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas who paid tribute to Franco-Jordanian cooperation in the medical field.

Dr. Malhas said Jordan sought to maintain a high level of training of its medical staff in various specialisations to cater to the requirement, the 21st century.

Among the other speakers at the opening ceremony was Stephane Romatite, the French charge d'affaires who noted the joint conferences were useful for Franco-Jordanian cooperation.

Praising the high standard of the Jordanian medical profession Mr. Romatite said that the French and Jordanian conference.

The Jordanian medical profession Mr. Romatite said that the French and Jordanian medical systems are similar in that they are both controlled centrally by a Health Ministry assisted by various departments.

Among the topics discussed at the conference were organisational matters related to continued medical training, the role of the universities in continued training for doctors, improving the standard and the services of the medical laboratories and prospects for the application of continued medical training in Jordan.

A book exhibition was organised on the sideline of the conference attended by medical experts from Jordan and France.

3 senior police officers retire

AMMAN (J.T.) — Three senior Public Security Department (PSD) officers with the rank of major general have been retired upon a decision by the council of ministers.

The officers, who only two days ago were promoted to the rank of major general, will leave service as of Jan. 1, 1994.

They are Nouredin Kheir, Awmi Mismar, and Ahmad Khasawneh.

Following the retirement of the three generals, PSD Director General Abdul Rahman Al Udwan reshuffled his senior staff as of Dec. 11, 1993 as follows:

Major General Anwar Bousl was made PSD inspector general and assistant to the PSD chief; Major General Mahmoud Abu Hammour becomes assistant PSD director for manpower; Brigadier Mohammad Tarazi becomes assistant director for judicial affairs; Colonel Mahmoud Obeidat takes over as acting director of the PSD public relations affairs and Colonel Abdul Rahman Kharabsheh becomes deputy director for the police department in the Madaba district.

WHAT'S GOING ON EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Photographic exhibition by artist Basheer Al-Hajeh at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Plastic art exhibition on the Intifada and Jerusalem at the Professional Association Complex.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Edelbert Della at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Beotr Bewluczak at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of prints and drawings by Fakhr El Nissa Zeid at Darat Al Funn of the Abdul Hameed Shomem Foundation in Jabal Lweibdeh. Also showing the permanent exhibition (Saturday-Thursday 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.)
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by a number of Iraqi artists at La Casa Art Gallery (between the 5th and 6th Circles).
- ★ Exhibition of sewing equipment at the Royal Cultural Centre (11:00 - 7:00 p.m.).
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by artist Khalid Khreis at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of watercolours by artist Shaber Jirmi at the Goethe Institute.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Farhadi Abdel Hafez at the Balka' Art Gallery in Al Fuhes (10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 720902).
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by several Jordanian and Iraqi artists at the Orfali Art Gallery in Um Uthaina.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

- ★ Christmas carols presentation at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

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Summit after dip

THE PROJECTED summit between presidents Assad and Clinton in January could be the breakthrough that the parties to the ongoing peace process have long been looking for to reenergize the peace talks. It is hard to imagine that the U.S. president and the Syrian leader would have scheduled such a meeting without having agreed on basic principles touching on ways and means to advance the Syrian-Israeli bilateral peace negotiations and unlock the other remaining tracks affecting both the Palestinian as well as the Jordanian and Lebanese fronts. Yet it may still be premature to hail the upcoming summit as the beginning of the end of all existing problems that still lie in the path of the peace process. The fact that the two leaders will meet on neutral grounds suggests that they may be heading for a happy medium solution that lies somewhere between what Damascus is insisting on to resume peace talks and what Washington may view as the compromise that could untie the Syrian-Israeli knot. It is not worthy that Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa has less than conciliatory words than expected to say about the dramatic announcement which was made Thursday by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher about the Geneva meeting. This may suggest that Damascus has not changed its position substantially on the eve of the encounter between presidents Assad and Clinton. On the other hand, there are also signs that the Clinton administration is slowly warming up to Syria by relaxing the sanctions that are still applied against it. The news about U.S. permission to supply Syrian Airways with U.S. manufactured aircraft could be just the beginning to relax further the Western embargo of Syria in a bid to influence its position on the peace process altogether. And this is not all. The agreement by Syria to supply much-awaited information about missing Israeli soldiers in Lebanon coupled with the new policies to permit more Syrian Jews to leave the country could be also the start of a process that could lead to an Israeli acceptance of Syrian requests for complete Israeli withdrawal from the Syrian Golan Heights as a price for complete peace with it.

The implications of any breakthrough on the Syrian-Israeli front are clearly far-reaching, since Damascus has tremendous clout over several Palestinian factions opposed to the PLO-Israel peace accord struck last September as well as over Hizbollah in Lebanon. Washington knows only too well that without Syrian blessing of the Palestinian deal with Israel the road ahead will be strewn with booby traps that may end up aborting it altogether. Hence the importance of the expected Clinton-Assad summit in January. The fact that Syria has officially agreed to resume peace negotiation with Israel in Washington by mid-January is an additional indication that an important development has indeed taken place as a result of Mr. Christopher's shuttle diplomacy between Israel and Syria.

EDITORIAL COMMENTARIES

THE VOTE of confidence in the government of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali was in fact a vote of confidence in the democratic march chosen by Jordan and its people, and the debates in Parliament and the speeches were all part of the democratic process, said Al Ra'i daily. The deputies who delivered speeches over the past four days, whether in support or against the government, have all done their homework well and presented a good performance which covered the economic, social and political subjects of concern to the public, said the paper. Although some of the speeches were lengthy and not attractive to the listeners, and despite the fact that some contained harsh remarks against the government and the prime minister, one can say that the deliberations truly reflected the spirit of democracy in the house, continued the daily. It said that both those who supported the government and those who stood against its policy deserve appreciation and gratitude for deepening the meaning of democracy through their different views and stands and for pinpointing weaknesses and reminding the government of its tasks and the chronic issues facing the country. One can conclude that the sessions of the past four days were successful and helped bolster the democratic experiment in the Kingdom, it added. The paper said that the prime minister is to be commended for being relevant with the deputies.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily voiced support for a recent call from a group of Jordanian nationalists advocating a tripartite unity among Jordan, Iraq and Syria. Saeda Abdo said that the call came amid very critical circumstances prevailing in the Arab World and at a time when the U.S.-Israeli alliance is trying to impose its own formula of a settlement on the Arab Nation. The writer said that the three countries ought to embark on a kind of union between them to counter the idea that has been peddled by the West of forming a Jordanian, Palestinian, Israeli ecnomic union. What the Arab masses are yearning for is real unity among Arab states, but a kind of confederation can be created for the time being between Amman, Damascus and Baghdad, continued the writer. But, she said, under the present circumstances, this seems to be a bit difficult due to the political stands of Baghdad and Damascus vis-a-vis each other therefore, the Arab nationalist group ought to elaborate on its proposal and offer a practical programme, like economic cooperation among the three countries, as a first step leading to a confeder.

Jordanian Perspective

Jordan needs answers where its security is concerned

By Dr. Musa Kellani

PALESTINIAN LEADER Yasser Arafat's obvious reluctance to sign agreements on security arrangements and economic cooperation between Jordan and the envisaged autonomous Palestinian territory raises quite a few questions.

His talks about confederation with Jordan in the context of the agreements was nothing but a smokescreen to hide his refusal to seriously discuss the issue with His Majesty King Hussein.

If some of the accounts of the King's meeting with Mr. Arafat Sunday night are accurate, then the Palestinian leader used the same argument with His Majesty to slip through a firm commitment or a flat refusal.

Diplomacy or not, Mr. Arafat's contention that any agreement between Jordan and the Palestinians should be based on a relationship of confederation between two sovereign entities is flawed at this point in time.

For one thing, the shape of the sovereign Palestinian entity that we all want is going to be determined by how things work out in the first two years of self-rule, before discussions begin on the "final status" of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

It is imperative that the Palestinians in the occupied territories and outside as well as Jordan as a sovereign entity use those two or three years to pool their efforts and strengthen their hands in such a way that pulls the rug from under the feet of the Israeli argument against Palestinian statehood.

Quite telling was Mr. Arafat's departure from Amman Monday without holding a second round of meetings with King Hussein. One of the official reasons for not holding the meeting was that he was due in Germany the next day.

But that does not hold much water. What was at stake for discussions with His Majesty after both their meetings with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher was far too important than a one or two hour delay for Mr. Arafat to bask in the red carpet and VIP treatment in Germany.

What Mr. Arafat effectively said at Monday's press conference after meeting Mr. Christopher was: Jordanians should not be worried about security and economic agreements with the autonomous territories since, at the end of the day, it is going to be a Palestinian-Jordanian confederation. As such, argued the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chairman, Jordanian-Palestinian relations go beyond signing "an agreement here on an agreement there."

Well, let me correct you Mr. Chairman. We Jordanians do have genuine concerns, confederation or no confederation, five or 10 years from now or in the year 2050.

In the security context, we are worried about the concessions the PLO may have to make to the Israelis regarding entry and exit of Palestinians from the autonomous Gaza Strip and Jericho as well as the rest of the occupied West Bank.

Whether you see it or not, or choose not to see it, Mr. Arafat, the problem is clear: Jordan has to have some kind of arrangement under which it has a say in who goes and comes over the bridges and other exit and entry points of its territory. Jordan simply cannot keep a corridor open from the airport to the entry/exit point and accept PLO assurances of whatever kind that none of the people coming in or going out pose any security threat to the Kingdom.

It is not as much as trust and confidence that figure in the Jordanian stand as its sovereign powers and rights to preempt any threats to its security and stability.

Further down the line, the Jordanian position is: Jordan will not accept any agreement that derives from Israel-PLO negotiations in Egypt or anywhere else if such an accord does not contain satisfactory answers to the Kingdom's security and stability concerns.

The flow of human traffic is only one element of Jordan's concerns, and there many other aspects which need to be addressed and are addressed in a proposed draft agreement on security arrangements.

Next comes economic cooperation. It is surprising that Mr. Arafat again hid behind the confederation theory to put off the question of an agreement.

Given his single-handed tackling of billions of dollars (dinars, pounds, marks, schillings, cronos, francs of whatever) over the decades, one would have thought Mr. Arafat had better economic acumen of the basics in monetary affairs to appreciate the genuine Jordanian concerns and the wisdom to see what is possible and what is not. (Here, I have heard critics reject such an assumption altogether, saying that if Mr. Arafat had been efficient with the resources of the PLO, the organisation would not have found itself in the financial mess, artificial or not, that it is found in and which, according to most accounts, forced the chairman to accept the autonomy deal. But then, that is besides the point.)

Jordan has a genuine cause to seek a say in the monetary and banking affairs of the occupied territories if only because

around one third of its currency is in circulation among the Palestinians living there.

The Kingdom cannot simply afford to let things take its course as far as the dinar is concerned within or without the context of Palestinian autonomy.

Jordan has worked hard and Jordanians have paid dear sacrifices to regain the stability of the dinar from the slide of 1988, and we are not about to let Mr. Arafat or anyone else undermine it.

If indeed Mr. Arafat and his economic strategists have other ideas, like using any other currency in the occupied territories and setting up their own central bank and monetary authorities, Jordan has nothing to say about it. It will be an independent Palestinian decision which Jordan has pledged to respect and support.

But then, Jordan has a right to demand that it be told about PLO plans in advance so that the Kingdom could adopt suitable measures to defend and protect its currency from abuse, whether across the river or anywhere else.

Regardless of Mr. Arafat's arguments, Jordan's concerns over security and economic cooperation have little to do with any confederation, federation or any other form of future relationship between Jordan and the Palestinians. If anything, the same future relationship could be undermined beyond repair if the PLO chairman does not take the Jordanian concerns into serious consideration.

Despite its reservations, Jordan has thrown its weight behind the Sept. 13 Israel-PLO agreement. But such support should not mean Mr. Arafat or anyone else taking too many things for granted and undertaking measures that have serious bearing on the well-being of the Kingdom.

I would not like to offer any advice or suggestions to Mr. Arafat or any of his aides who have been charting strategies for decades. They have their priorities and objectives and, I am sure, they are not finding themselves in too comfortable a situation either.

But I would like to tell them only one thing: Things have reached the point of no return in the context of the peace process and it might be a good idea to give up some of the old, useless strategies and brinkmanship and come forward with bold and innovative ideas that would protect the interest of both sides of the river.

Otherwise, the price that both will have to pay will be too high.

The Week in Print

Debate in Parliament is proof of democracy; peace in region hinges on Israel's withdrawal

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

THE LOCAL press focussed attention in the past week on the debate in Parliament on the vote of confidence in the government of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, on the U.S. secretary of state's tour of the Middle East, the situation in the occupied Arab lands and domestic affairs.

A columnist in Al Dustour said that the Parliament members have played their role very well in bolstering democracy in Jordan through their criticism of the government. It is true that many of us realised in advance that the government would win the vote of confidence, but what surprised us was the severe criticism levelled at the government, said Mohammad Kawash, a columnist in Al Dustour.

The debate, which lasted a few days, has truly bolstered the meaning and the practice of democracy in the country, he said.

It is true that the debate was heated and the deputies criticised the government for not consulting them over the reshuffle, but it is time now for serious action, in cooperation with the government, to serve the nation, said Tareq Masarweh.

The writer, who writes in Al Ra'i daily, called on the deputies to concentrate on urgent issues related to finance, economy and other matters of deep concern to the public.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab daily said that he backed serious criticism of the government's policy provided it is based on logic and aimed at safeguarding the higher national interests.

Salameh Ekour said that many of the deputies who criticised the government for a number of things would not have taken that particular stand had the prime minister given them ministerial portfolios.

The writer said that people appreciate only those deputies who had examined the government's policy statement and debated it with objectivity. He said that most of the criticism levelled at Dr. Majali was not objective and far from being honest.

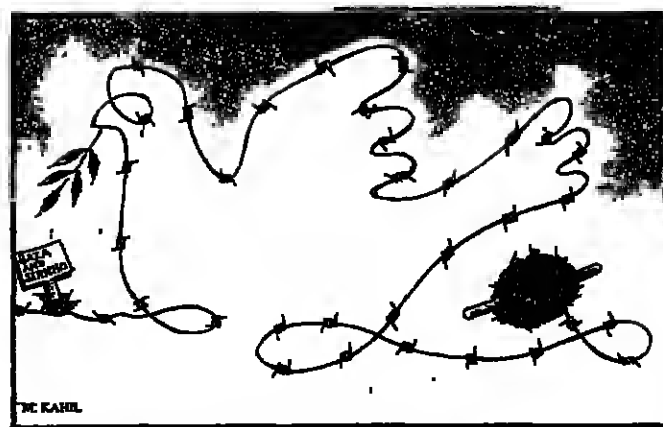
Discussing U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's mission in the Middle East, Taher Al Udwan, a writer in Al Dustour, said that despite obstacles in his path, the U.S. secretary's mission is not as difficult at that of his predecessor Henry Kissinger. This is because most of the complications have been ironed up and the normalisation of the Arab-Israeli relations is going ahead on schedule, said the writer.

Unlike the days of Mr. Kissinger, the Arabs are all for peace now and the two sides are on speaking terms at the economic and political levels, he added.

His views were countered by Salameh Ekour, a columnist in Al Shaab, who said that the U.S. administration should realise that the region will not taste real peace unless Israel pulls out its forces from all Arab territories occupied in war.

The writer said that no matter how hard Mr. Christopher attempts to achieve a settlement, the region will never be at peace and no matter how skillfully the Americans and the Israelis adopt the carrot and stick approach, there can be no settlement because the Arabs are not ready to cede their lands as long as the exchange of land for peace has not materialised.

Al Dustour daily said that there can be no chance for any success of Mr. Christopher's mission as long as the Israelis are determined to abort it. Nothing has been achieved from the U.S. secretary's trip because of the Israeli intransigence, and it should be emphasised that any progress towards peace lies primarily with the Rabin government, said the paper.



It said that Mr. Rabin is procrastinating the question of withdrawal from the Golan Heights and is delaying the implementation of the Israel-PLO deal, both of which are considered essential elements for a successful settlement.

Discussing the Jordanian-Palestinian meetings to chart policies for future cooperation, Sultan Al Hattab, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, regretted that most of the meetings among the joint committees achieved very little so far.

The writer said it was unreasonable for the PLO to seek cooperation with the Israelis while ignoring the need for bolstering Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation in the economic and political fields. He said the technical difficulties should by no means be allowed to hinder agreements on future cooperation, noting that the delay in taking decisions was harmful to the future relationship.

Saleh Al Qallah, a columnist in Al Dustour, expressed dismay over Mr. Arafat's departure from Amman

without signing documents opening the road for a meaningful cooperation with Jordan.

The writer said that although the reasons for the delay are still unknown to the public, one can only wonder why the two sides have not yet reached a final formula that could pave the way for a fruitful relationship and a brighter future for the two sides.

Discussing the developments in the occupied lands, Mohammad Kawash, a columnist in Al Dustour, expressed belief that Mr. Rabin does not control matters regarding the withdrawal of Israeli forces.

The writer said that Mr. Rabin seems unable to start the pullout, in implementation of the PLO-Israel deal, and has been delaying all actions in this regard and to gain more time to subdue the internal opposition.

He said that while Mr. Rabin is trying to do politics, the occupied lands have been transformed into hell, with the Jewish settlers provoking the Arabs, and the clashes

in Al Ra'i, said that the intifada is entering its seventh year with more strength than ever before. The intifada should continue regardless of their Israel-PLO deal and until the independent Palestinian state has been established with Jerusalem as its capital.

The writer said that there is urgent need for the intifada as the Arabs witness Israel's procrastinations regarding the implementation of the PLO-Israel deal.

Discussing the U.S.-Jordanian relations, Tareq Masarweh said that Jordan is hoping that its debt burden will be reduced, that inspection of Aqaba-bound shipping will stop and that U.S. will help Jordan to get the proper funding for building the Al Wahdeh dam, on the Yarmouk River, to ensure further amount of water for its agricultural production. The columnist, who writes for Al Ra'i, said that while Jordan remains committed to the U.N.-imposed sanctions on Iraq, it is being subjected to harassment in Aqaba at a time when the other countries surrounding Iraq are conducting normal trade relations with that country.

As long as the Americans continue to remain hostile to Jordan, Jordanians continue to believe that Washington is not a friend of their country, said the writer.

His views were echoed by his colleague in Al Ra'i, Fahed Al Fanek, who expressed hope that the new American ambassador, who is yet to come here, would be a true representative of the great American nation.

He said he hoped that the new envoy would help build U.S.-Jordanian relations on mutual respect and common interests and would build bridges of friendship.

What the new envoy can do as a start, said the writer, is to end the harassment of Jordan-bound ships because this is a hostile practice, harming the national economy.

A guest columnist in Sawt Al Shaab advocated the cause of Jordanian job-seekers who, he said, are finding strong competition for jobs from the guest workers.

Samir Naifeh said that lately Jordanians have been complaining that they were either turned away from jobs, which are subsequently offered to non-Jordanians or are dismissed after working for some time because employers find non-Jordanians who can do the same job for less pay.

The writer said that the employers ought to show more responsibility towards their country and countrymen and the job-seekers ought to accept jobs available in the labour market and try to improve their condition through hardwork.

Hope of intervention turned to nightmare in Somalia

By Aidan Hartley
Reuters

MOGADISHU — The mission began with U.S. troops saving starving Somali children who had been robbed of food by gangsters.

It descended into a nightmare as a warlord's militia challenged United Nations peacekeepers — and won.

News film of chanting crowds dragging U.S. corpses through the streets and a captured U.S. pilot staring in terror brought home to the world how wrong it had gone.

A year after U.S. troops stormed the Mogadishu beach to launch a humanitarian operation, the famine is over in Somalia.

But the mission failed to break the power of clan militias and the United Nations now accepts it lost its way when it sought a showdown with warlord Mohammad Farah Aideded.

Time is running out for Somalia again. The world is growing reluctant to risk the lives of peacekeepers and throw in money if an end to the political chaos cannot be found.

"It can either move forward into rebuilding a civil society, or it can return to the quagmire of man-made strife and famine," said a declaration after a conference of Somalis and international donors in Addis Ababa on Dec. 1.

By the time outgoing President George Bush ordered in U.S. troops last Dec. 9, an estimated 350,000 people had died in a famine brought on by the clan warfare that erupted after the overthrow of dictator Mohammad Siad Barre in 1991.

The warlords' hinge of extortion and looting had strangled humanitarian relief efforts. "Open up the roads and get food to the people — that rhetoric made sense at the time," said Ian MacLeod, spokesman for the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF).

In a country awash with weapons, it seemed clear that disarming the gunmen who cruised Mogadishu in "technical" battle wagons was also vital to rebuilding Somalia.

Washington hesitated to act until just before the U.S.-led task force handed over to a multinational U.N. army on May 4.

At peace talks in Addis Ababa the warlords agreed to form a transitional government and disband their forces.

These goals were forgotten when the ambush killing of 24 Pakistani soldiers plunged the 29,000-strong U.N. army into an undeclared war against Gen. Aideded's Hahre Gedir clan militia.

Mr. Aideded, a 57-year-old former general who played a prominent role in Siad Barre's overthrow, felt the U.N. was rubbing him of the power he deserved.

Outside regions he controlled in central Somalia and

south Mogadishu, factions welcomed the U.N. protection. But others began to see foreign troops as an occupation force.

"We hoped the soldiers were coming to feed us. Instead we have eaten bullets and bombs," said Musa Sheikh, a watchman at the derelict Hawlwadag School in downtown Mogadishu.

After the U.N. called for the 'Pakis' killers to be brought to justice, U.S. gunships blasted a radio station from which Gen. Aideded broadcast hate messages against the U.N. ammunition dumps and other buildings connected to him were also hit.

Jonathan Howe, the retired U.S. admiral running the U.N. operation, put up wild west-style poster offering a \$25,000 reward for Gen. Aideded's capture.

More than 70 U.N. soldiers from different contingents were shot dead in battle or by snipers or blown up by mines in the hunt for Gen. Aideded in south Mogadishu's warren of dusty streets.

As many as 10,000 Somalis may have been killed or wounded in clashes with peacekeepers or in fighting between militias, senior U.S. officials quoted by the New York Times said.

U.S. helicopters circled the city, often raking the crowded streets with machineguns and smashing buildings with anti-tank missiles as they chased Gen. Aideded's rag-tag militia.

After one attack an angry crowd turned on foreign newsmen and killed four of them, three of whom worked for Reuters.

Not even hospitals were immune from U.N. attacks.

"If the U.N. is going to be involved in such a military operation again, it's got to be seen as spectacularly clean in human rights terms. And they certainly failed on that," said Patrick Gilkes, who is writing a human rights report on Somalia.

"We got ourselves into a four-month guerrilla war with him. It got nasty and it didn't work," said one U.S. official.

Washington backed out of the mission to snatch Gen. Aideded after 18 U.S. soldiers were killed in a single battle on Oct. 3 and a pilot from a downed helicopter was captured.

President Bill Clinton, responding to outrage in the United States, sent an envoy to make peace with Gen. Aideded. The warlord announced a truce and freed the airman and a Nigerian captive.

A switch in U.N. policy followed and Gen. Aideded triumphantly emerged from hiding last month.

UNICEF's MacLeod points to achievements in humanitarian efforts over the last year — thousands of children now attend school, health has improved and refugees are returning.

Food aid and commercial goods have flooded into Mogadishu.

ملكيه من الملك

Half truths and history — the debate over Jews and the slave trade

By David Mills

A SMALL storm has been swirling — in the media, in academia, but mostly in the frictional world of ethnocentric politics — around the involvement of Jews in the African slave trade. It has been a tempest of hot rhetoric, factual confusion and moral recrimination. It has revealed the willingness of some black public figures — Louis Farrakhan and Leonard Jeffries in particular — to use historical caricature as a blunt instrument in their political battles with present-day Jews. It has also revealed the historical ignorance of some well-respected critics of black anti-Semitism. The passions driving the debate on both sides have thwarted any calm understanding of the past.

The controversy kicked up two years ago when Mr. Jeffries, an Afrocentric faculty member at the City College of New York, made a notorious speech in Albany, N.Y., cataloging the supposed crimes of Jews against black people. One of the things he said was, "Everyone knows rich Jews helped finance the slave trade." Some commentators treated this not as a demagogic simplification, but as a flat-out historical lie.

In late 1991, Mr. Farrakhan's Nation of Islam published "The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews," quoting from the extensive research of Jewish historians to indict, to effect, today's Jews for everything from the ownership of South American sugar plantations three centuries ago to Jewish participation in the Confederate war effort. When a black professor at Wellesley College assigned the book to his introductory African-American history class, Jewish students protested and four national Jewish groups recommended the professor's job status be reviewed. Both the Simon Wiesenthal Centre and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith have published rebuttals comparing "The Secret Relationship" to the most infamous works of antisemitic propaganda in the 20th century.

Some observers acknowledge that certain communities of Jews participated directly in black slavery — but in far smaller numbers than non-Jews among the Portuguese, Dutch, English and French, than Arabs, or than Africans themselves. To focus on the role of Jews, they say, is gratuitous at best, antisemitic at

worst. But to a few critics, even mentioning Jews and the slave trade is hateful and bigoted. Jews were not significantly involved, they claim — contrary to the scholarly record, much of it compiled by historians who are Jewish.

"There wouldn't have been any slave trade at all," syndicated columnist Nat Hentoff told me. "If it had not been for the middlemen, the chiefs of certain African tribes, who had captured people from other tribes and enslaved them, it's important to say Africans have sold Africans. It's important to know that." It is indeed important to understand all aspects of the history of slavery. For African-American people seeking to understand their place in the world, the history of slavery is as important as history of the Holocaust for Jews. No element of a great tragedy is too small to be explored, particularly if it has been generally ignored.

Isn't it also important, I asked Hentoff, to know that Jews bought and sold Africans?

"If it's indeed the case, of course," Hentoff said, acknowledging that he is not a scholar on the subject. "If you can nail that down, of course it would be important to know that." Most Americans, used to imagining slavery in terms of cotton fields and the Old South, don't realise that the transatlantic slave trade sent Africans primarily to south America and the islands of the West Indies. According to one well-regarded census, 9.6 million Africans arrived alive in the so-called "New World" from the 16th century through the 19th century. Of these, less than 5 per cent, 427,000, were brought to what is now the United States. Nearly 4 million went to Brazil, the largest single devourer of African labour. There, the average life span of a slave was a few years.

Most Americans don't realise either that the transatlantic slave trade was driven by the sugar trade. Sugar cane was a scarce medicinal plant in medieval Europe. But when white colonisers started cultivating sugar in the fertile tropics of the Americas, it rapidly became a staple — and a great source of wealth for Europe's shipping and trading powers. This New World economy of sugar and slaves — of vast, labour-intensive plantations — began in earnest in Brazil during the 1500s, according to

historians. The involvement of Jews in black slavery began there also.

The Portuguese were the first to colonise Brazil, and Sephardic Jews from Portugal were among these early settlers. "In its early years," writes Seymour B. Lieberman in "New World Jewry, 1493-1825," "Brazil was built by Negro slaves (400,000 between 1570 and 1670) and the acumen, hard work and calculating perseverance of the Jews."

Some background is essential. The Sephardim — that is, the Jews of Spain and Portugal — had flourished for centuries in the Iberian peninsula. By 1497, they made up an estimated 20 per cent of Portugal's population of 1 million. But that year, the king of Portugal compelled the Jews to convert to Christianity. (Spain had similarly forced its Jews to convert or flee five years earlier). While many Jews left Portugal, others indeed were baptised and became "New Christians." Despite the church's persecution, some continued to practice Judaism in secret; they came to be known as "Marranos."

New Christians were drawn to Brazil, in part because it was far from the seat of the Inquisition, but also because the South American colony was a place where the Sephardim could apply their established expertise in trade and sugar cultivation. Soon a Sephardic community thrived in Brazil's pivotal port city of Recife. When the Dutch — then unique in Europe for their religious tolerance — took control of Brazil in 1630, the Marranos there were able to practice Judaism openly again.

During this time in Brazil, Jews owned a small percentage of the sugar plantations but were the predominant retailers of slaves in the colony, according to Arnold Wiznitzer's "Jews in Colonial Brazil." The shipping of Africans to Brazil was monopolised by the Dutch West India Company, which sold them "at public auctions against cash payment," Mr. Wiznitzer writes. "The buyers who appeared at the auctions were almost always Jews." Those brokers then sold slaves to plantation owners on credit. More than 23,000 Africans were shipped to Brazil between 1636 to 1645, Mr. Wiznitzer says, a period when perhaps half of the 3,000 white civilians living there were Jews.

In 1654, the Portuguese recaptured Brazil, chasing the Dutch and the Sephardim out



— an event that would affect the destiny of Jews and Africans in the New World.

While many of Brazil's Jews headed for the freedom of the Netherlands, some Sephardic traders were "eager to remain in the West Indies," according to a history of colonial Jewry by Jacob Rader Marcus, long-time director of the American Jewish Archives. Some "fled to French Martinique and Guadeloupe, others to Jamaica and to English Barbados, where they furthered the sugar industry and the Negro slave economy which it created," Marcus writes.

The Jewish refugees from Brazil, as University of Kansas economic historian Richard B. Sheridan has pointed out, "were masters of sugar technology and taught the English the art of sugar making." The sugar colonies of Barbados and Jamaica grew to become jewels of the British empire during the 1700s. An estimated 1.1 million Africans were shipped to these islands over the entire course of the slave trade.

The Jewish traders were not the main beneficiaries of this economic boom, however. One British historian notes: "Most Jews in Barbados and

Jamaica in the 18th century were small men, shopkeepers... The sugar trade became increasingly concentrated in the hands of the sugar-planters' agents in London, a restricted and confined circle. (Jews) did not participate." The role of Jewish traders was apparently limited, during the early 1700s, to the sale of "great numbers of 'refugee' Negroes (sickly slaves)," according to Stephen Alexander Fortune's "Merchants and Jews: The Struggle for British West Indian Commerce, 1650-1750." These Africans, bought cheaply, were resold "at considerable profit" once healthy.

The role of Jewish merchants in the slave economy of Martinique and Guadeloupe was eventually restricted as well. Initially, "the Sephardi emigrants from Brazil... engaged both in plantation agriculture and trade, exporting sugar and tobacco to Europe and importing slaves and cloth," according to history, "European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism, 1550-1750." The Catholic French, however, ordered the expulsion of all Jews from these islands in 1685, thus virtually ending their role in the trade.

The Jewish and Dutch refugees from Brazil also landed in Suriname in the late 17th century, establishing it as a sugar colony. This small piece of South America, as Harvard University historian Eugene Genovese has noted, would be the one and only place where Jews constituted a substantial planter class. Genovese cited one scholar's finding that 115 of Suriname's 400 sugar estates in 1730 were owned by Jews.

The island of Curaçao, a pivotal Dutch distribution centre off the coast of Venezuela, was the site of the largest Jewish settlement in the New World. The Sephardic com-

munity there numbered almost 2,000 by the mid-1700s, constituting about half of the white population. Curaçao's Jews prospered early through shipping and slave-trading, writes David Lowenthal in "West Indian Societies." Isaac S. and Suzanne A. Emmanuel, historians of Curaçaoan Jewry, report that "almost every Jew bought from one to nine slaves for his personal use or for eventual resale." Later, Curaçaoan Jews became, as Stephen Fortune writes, "the predominant insurance underwriters for ships plying the Caribbean" — including slave ships.

Under the auspices of the Dutch, Sephardic Jews also had a direct hand in wholesale slave trading. As Arnold Wiznitzer has pointed out, Jews in Amsterdam owned as much as 10 per cent of the stock in the Dutch West India Company, the great slave-shipper enterprise that helped launch the Netherlands to international commercial prominence during the 1600s. But the French and English monopoly trading companies, which eventually dominated the shipping of Africans to New World colonies, excluded Jews from that level of the trade.

The far-flung Sephardic "trade diaspora" in the Caribbean led ultimately to the founding of Jewish communities in North America. Before the Revolutionary war, the largest settlement of Jews in

the colonies — perhaps as many as 1,000 by 1760 — was in the bustling port city of Newport, R.I. Aaron Lopez formerly a Marrano in Portugal, laid the first cornerstone of the Newport congregation's synagogue in 1759. (The building is now a historic site, the oldest synagogue in the United States). Lopez later became a shipper of legendary prosperity. Black slaves were among his cargoes, as his biographer, Stanley F. Chyet, has noted.

Gentiles, however, overwhelmingly controlled the slave business in colonial America. Rhode Island's Sephardic merchant-shippers were known mainly for their prominence in the business of selling oil from sperm whales used in candlemaking. So the real history of the participation of Jewish merchants in the slave trade is a lot more complex than Leonard Jeffries suggested with his line, "Everyone knows rich Jews helped finance the slave trade." Mr. Jeffries is clearly misusing historical facts to serve his animus against Jews today.

At the same time, a number of Jeffries' harsh critics have assumed that Jews had nothing to do with black slavery, or next to nothing. They said so publicly, and without qualification, during the Jeffries controversy. Jonathan Yardley wrote in The Washington Post that Mr. Jeffries, on this point had, "turned history upside down."

When asked him what part Jews did have in trafficking Africans, Yardley didn't know but said it would have been "relatively minor." A. M. Rosenthal of the New York Times wrote that Mr. Jeffries "says in a public forum that the Jews financed the slave trade. That is not quite the equivalent of (the accusation) Christ-killer, but coming close, make no mistake."

The holes in the popular record have led to misunderstanding. In a 1991 article in the Jewish monthly Midstream, headlined "An Old/New Lie: Jews in the Slave Trade," historian Saul Friedman noted that "Jews are remarkably absent from major texts" on New World slavery and cited seven history books by name. For Mr. Friedman, this constitutes proof that the role of Jews was negligible. Actually, he merely demonstrates the inadequacies of such "major texts." It is necessary to consider this vacuum of common knowledge when analysing how some blacks are trying to make political hay out of this complex history. If the popular record weren't incomplete — that is, if everyone already knew that Sephardic merchants and planters had played a small but significant role in the New World slave trade — there would be no "secret" relationship for Leonard Jeffries and Louis Farrakhan to exploit — The Washington Post. . . .

Beetles do it better, say pesticide experts

Chemical pesticides are effective in protecting our fruit and vegetable crops, but an insect or a beetle can often do the job just as well and without risk to the health of the farmer, the consumer or the soil. This was the message from the First Regional Seminar on the Use of Pesticides on Fruit and Vegetable Crops which was held in Amman in October.

The seminar was organised by the French Embassy in Amman in cooperation with the Fruit Growers Association (Ceotral Area) and the Ministry of Agriculture and with financial support from the European Community. It gave representatives from two Middle Eastern countries and a number of European technical experts a chance to share their experience of pesticide use and to discuss the growing range of biological alternatives.

Fruit and vegetable production in the Middle East is booming as modern techniques boost production and rising living standards boost demand. The good news of more abundant and varied production must, however, be set against the health and environmental risks that come from the excessive or incorrect use of the chemical pesticides that are now routinely used to the greenhouse production of crops.

Most Middle Eastern representatives at the seminar identified similar problems of a heavy use of pesticides by farmers who have little or no understanding of the products they are using. Because they do not understand how toxic many of the pesticides are they often fail to wear proper protective clothing and they use the materials incorrectly.

A Jordanian study carried out by the Centre for Pesticide Formulation and Residue Analysis in 1991-92, shows that 45 per cent of farmers questioned did not see any danger in using as many as three or more pesticides together. 30 per cent did not respect the recommended waiting period between the application of pesticides and the harvesting of the crop, and many disposed of unwanted material by pouring it on the ground or burying it.

In Lebanon and the West Bank, political factors make

the situation even worse. Lebanon has experienced 17 years of uncontrolled pesticide imports and a complete absence of any government service to inform farmers on the correct use, storage or disposal of materials. Lebanese farmers are now routinely using substances which have long been banned elsewhere.

In the West Bank, pesticides warnings on containers are written in Hebrew not Arabic and there is neither an extension service for farmers nor any laboratory facilities for testing pesticide residues.

Not all the news at the seminar was gloomy. With support from the French NGO Comité Catholique Contre Faim et Pour Développement (CCFD) and the EC, the Centre for Environment at Bir Zeit University in Ramallah has carried out an education programme with Jordan Valley farmers which produced cuts in pesticide use of up to 40-70 per cent.

More good news came in papers given by the European experts at the seminar. These concentrated on the biological pest control and integrated pest management systems that

are being developed as an alternative to chemical pesticides.

Biological pest control has actually been practiced for over 70 years and Jordan is among the countries with a successful experience of it, in this case with the use of predators against mealy bug infestations in the Jordan Valley lemon groves.

But it has only been in recent years as the damaging side effects of chemicals on both health and the environment

have become better known that the biological approach has been accepted as a mainstream alternative to chemicals.

In an address to the conference, EC ambassador in Amman Renato Batti pointed out that the seminar provided participants with the opportunity to exchange views on the issues involved and to begin discussion on a regional solution to what is clearly a common regional problem — Economic Community Newsletter.

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JORDAN WELCOMES

Mr. De Nolf and his ROULARTA media group partners

The most important media group in Belgium arrived in Amman on Wednesday, Dec. 8, 1993.

Mr. De Nolf, is the president of this important media group and has joined in the many activities that ROULARTA had during their stay in Jordan.

ROULARTA is a media group dealing with magazines for business, retired people, sports, economics, leisure and many more. They are also the owners of a commercial newspaper that enters every home in Belgium, making Mr. De Nolf, who is also the president of a commercial television network, the "Mr. Maxwell" of Belgium.

Some of the activities that ROULARTA enjoyed in Jordan during their five day stay included a memorable dinner at the village of Kan Zaman, visiting the rose red city of Petra and the Roman city of Jerash, camping in the desert of Wadi Rum, dinner and a swim at the lowest spot on the face of the earth; the Dead Sea, and not to forget the ride on the old Hijjaz steam train.

Also, during their stay ROULARTA attended a lecture by Mr. Erik Van Vooren, a professor of marketing at the Vlerick School for Management. The title of the lecture was "The Magazine As A Tool in Direct Marketing Media Mix." Mr. Van Vooren is the President/CEO of Montreux Symposium.

The whole trip of Roularta was perfectly organised and managed by Mr. Jo De Bock of Neckermann travel company in Belgium who worked as a team with the Amman Marriott and International Traders of Jordan.

Lebanese parliament passes 1993 budget

The total expenditure for 1993 was put at 3,816 billion liras, up from last year's actual expenditure of 1,834 billion liras (\$1 billion), with a deficit

The biggest single allocation went to defence, 476 billion liras (\$275 million) or 12.5 per cent of the total.

week the increased revenue collection meant that he expected the final 1993 budget deficit to be reduced to 40-42 per cent of expenditure.

The parliament usually passes the budget in the first

month of the year but a government change in October last year and a shift in economic and financial policies de-

played it.

Thomson CSE launches

SF launches old offset

firm Thomson-CSF and a group
d a new gold refinery company,
p under a Franco-Saudi offset
ny said.

Reuters that the Dahah Company, of Jeddah late Monday, has a bid (\$11.5 million) and will begin work at the start of next year.

will be around 140 million riyals paid, adding that it will produce

and should be finished in 1995.

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Friday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.3270/80	Canadian dollar
	1.7000/10	Deutschmarks
	1.9038/48	Dutch guilders
	1.4560/70	Swiss francs
	35.56/60	Belgian francs
	5.8205/55	French francs
	1673.8/5.3	Italian lire
	109.12/22	Japanese yen
	8.2875/75	Swedish crowns
	7.3950/50	Norwegian crowns
	6.6550/50	Danish crowns
One sterling	\$1.4950/60	
One ounce of gold	\$382.10/382.60	

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Yeltsin tells voters: My constitution or civil war

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin threw his full weight behind his draft new constitution, warning Russians that if they rejected it in a national vote Sunday the country could slide into civil war.

In a television address to Russia's 107 million voters, Mr. Yeltsin avoided taking sides between the parties competing in simultaneous parliamentary polls, making it clear that approval of the constitution in the referendum was his key target.

"It is your decision — is Russia to be or not to be, the country we voted for in the presidential election and the April (1993) referendum. It is your decision — is there to be, or not to be, peace and calm in Russia."

Mr. Yeltsin's priorities are clear. If the new national charter is approved, the parliament's composition is not vital to him.

If it is rejected, he risks a repetition of the power struggle between president and parliament that culminated in an armed revolt by his opponents which he crushed two months ago, at the cost of nearly 150 lives.

"At the beginning of October peace in our country was hanging by a thread. Civil war was not just knocking at the door, but had already entered our house. We had to take extraordinary measures to ward off this threat," Mr. Yeltsin said.

Mr. Yeltsin said that the threat of civil war would persist as long as Russia still lacked a new basic law.

"The new Russia is forced to live by an old law," he said, referring to the much-amended 1978 Soviet-era constitution.

In the broadcast, recorded before he left to visit Brussels, the 62-year-old president said tackling crime and corruption, restoring order and other political goals would be impossible until a fresh basic law was in place.

He acknowledged that the draft did not suit everyone but said it was impossible to write an ideal constitution that would command unanimous support for all time.

"Whatever the shortcomings of the new constitution, the main thing is that it is a reliable mechanism for protecting Russia and its citizens from the upheavals of October 1993."

"Russia can no longer live according to a temporary scheme. At any moment it is threatened by a short circuit or a fire. We do not have the right to risk this any longer," he said.

In a referendum in April this year, Mr. Yeltsin won 58.7 per cent support for his rule and 53 per cent for his radical economic reform policies.

Mr. Yeltsin rejected the argument of some of his critics, including leading election candidate Grigory Yavlinsky, that the new constitution should have been left over for adoption by the new Federal Assembly, rather than by popular vote.

He said the election campaign showed how hard it was for rival electoral blocs to find a common language, and to what extent they were divided by mutual grievances and ambitions.

Constitutional campaigning ended at midnight Friday and electoral propaganda was to end 24 hours later.

Reformist blocs manoeuvred for position Thursday.

Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais, a leading member of the pre-election favourite Russia's Choice, told international observers he favoured a broad coalition.

Mr. Chubais mentioned the other three reformist blocs, the Yabloko Party of Economist

Grigory Yavlinsky, Sergei Shakhrai's Party of Russian Unity and Accord (PRES) and St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoly Sobchak's Democratic Reform Movement.

He put the chances of Russia's Choice, the only bloc to publicly describe itself as pro-presidential, at 20 to 35 per cent of the seats in the new lower house, the State Duma.

Alexei Arbatov of Yabloko (Apple) said his party would join a coalition only if it were necessary in future to keep maverick nationalist Alexander Zhirinovskiy or the Communists from power.

But he was decidedly cool about Russia's Choice, which is dominated by government ministers.

Mr. Yeltsin made no apology for the strong presidential powers in his draft, which critics say paves the way for dictatorship.

Referring to what he called "speculations and inventions" he said he had never hidden his belief that Russia, as a huge state spanning Europe and Asia, needed a strong president.

"A president elected by the whole population, by all the peoples, the citizens of all its regions or, as they say in old Russia, of all its lands — is called on to embody all of Russia and be the main guarantor of its unity and carry the chief responsibility for the country. But for this he must have corresponding powers," the president declared.

Turning to the parliamentary elections, Mr. Yeltsin called on voters to back those candidates who displayed a sense of responsibility rather than hatred or a desire for confrontation.

"Vote for those who give priority to deeds rather than words and sweet promises," he said.

Russia's chief reformist elec-

toral bloc Friday attacked ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy as a threat to the existence of the country, acknowledging him for the first time as a serious force in national politics.

In a statement issued two days before elections to a new parliament, Russia's Choice described Zhirinovskiy, whose popularity appears to have grown with a powerful television campaign, as a demagogue.

"In the 1991 campaign (for the presidency) Vladimir Wolfovich Zhirinovskiy seemed to all of us to be a political clown... No one could have conceived that in two years this circus, returned to our television screens, would look like a real threat to common sense," the statement said.

"This is a threat to the existence of the nation."

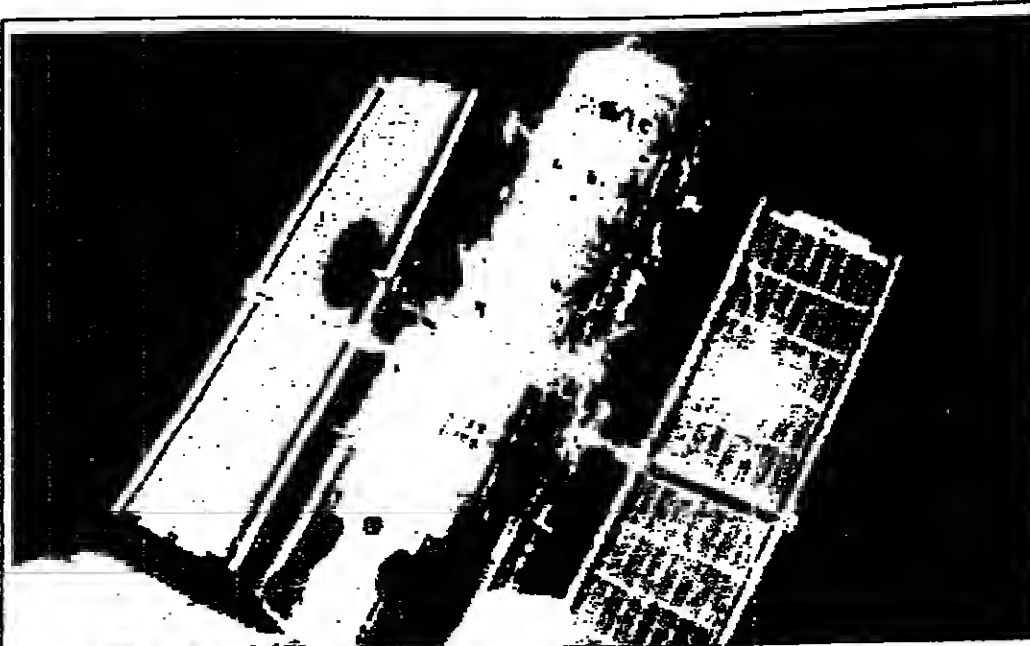
"If it has all been a joke to you so far, then now it really is frightening."

Mr. Zhirinovskiy's party seems set to clear the five per cent barrier necessary to enter the new State Duma at Dec. 12 polls. Opinion polls in Russia are unreliable, but some have shown his popularity growing towards 10 per cent and one puts it above that level.

Mr. Zhirinovskiy, 47, in his last television appearance before the elections Thursday night, called for harsh measures to root out criminal gangs in Russia. "We need to set up field courts martial on the spot and shoot the leaders of these gangs," he said.

He said he would restore Moscow's control of the former Soviet republics which he regards as historically Russian land. Economic sanctions would bring the newly independent states to their knees.

"Not one drop of blood will be spilled by Russian soldiers. They (the former republics) will ask to return," he said.



Endeavour releases repaired Hubble

HOUSTON, Texas — Endeavour's spectacular repair mission in space came to a breathtaking close early Friday with the release of the Hubble space telescope into orbit and hopefully a more productive future. The \$1.6-billion instrument was given corrective mirrors, a new camera, computers, gyroscopes and a host of other electronic components during five lengthy spacewalks that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) said went perfectly. Swiss astronaut Claude Nicollier, of the European Space Agency, used the shuttle's robot arm to lift the

bus-size telescope off its special platform and swing it over the cargo bay. At 5:26 a.m. (10:26 GMT), Nicollier released the telescope which remained momentarily poised over southwestern Africa before the Endeavour drew away from it at a speed of 30 centimetres (one foot) per second. "We have a good release," said shuttle Commander Dick Covey, when the manoeuvre was completed. The photograph shows the reflecting of the newly installed solar panels of the Hubble telescope as it sits in the cargo bay of the shuttle (AFP photo)

Army shoplifter gets top-dollar consultants' job

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The Pentagon has re-hired a civilian employee forced out for shoplifting, and given him a salary of \$85,000 annually. John Shannon, 39, was forced to resign as acting army secretary after he was arrested in August and charged with shoplifting a skirt and blouse worth about \$30 from a Fort Myer post exchange in Arlington, Virginia. He was rehired as a consultant last month to survey Defence Department inventories and make recommendations on what to dispose of, said army Lieutenant Colonel Stephanie Hochne. He will earn \$85,000 for a year's work, the spokeswoman said. A retired colonel, Shannon was named army under-secretary in 1989 and became acting army secretary when President Bill Clinton took office in 1993.

Nobody nose the trouble I've seen

OTTAWA (R) — A man stuck his nose in somebody else's business in a seedy area of the city and more than half of it was bitten off, Canadian police said. The 30-year-old man tried to break up a fight in the early hours of the morning between a taxi driver and two passengers who did not pay a fare, said Staff Sergeant Sue O'Sullivan of the Ottawa Police Service. "As a result of that fight, one of the passengers bit a huge portion of the victim's nose off," said Sgt. O'Sullivan. The unidentified victim underwent surgery in Ottawa Hours after the incident to reattach the severed parts of the nose.

Jackson talks on a return to face the music

LOS ANGELES (R) — Michael Jackson's lawyers have begun negotiations with prosecutors on the conditions for his return to the United States, and one attorney said Thursday the pop star would be back in Los Angeles before the end of the year. A key sticking point was Jackson's concern authorities would force him to let them photograph his genitals to corroborate descriptions of identifying marks given by a 13-year-old boy who has accused the singer of molesting him, KCBS-TV reported. Jackson is being treated for addiction to pain-killing drugs in Europe. He has denied any wrongdoing.

British killer beast may be a leopard

LONDON (R) — A British farmer claims she has solved the mystery of "the Beast of Bodmin Moor", which has killed farm animals and frightened southwest England. After watching a video of a black, long-tailed animal on BBC Television's Close Up programme, London Zoo expert Douglas Richardson said: "I would be willing to put a five on it being a leopard." Animal experts believe there are scores of big cats roaming remote parts of Britain. They are thought to be either escapees from zoos, or exotic pets dumped by people following the introduction of strict new regulations in 1976.

Latoya Jackson says mom called Michael 'faggot'

NEW YORK (R) — Michael Jackson's sister Latoya said her mother was so upset by his relationships with young boys that she branded him a "damned faggot" and the family paid money to the parents of young boys who visited the pop superstar. Her comments, made in an interview with NBC's Today Show, marked day two of a super family feud begun when Latoya arrived in Israel Wednesday and said she believed accusations that her brother had sexually molested young boys. Michael Jackson's image as a modern-day Peter Pan has disintegrated in recent weeks amid accusations that he sexually molested a 13-year-old who is suing him in civil court. Jackson is being treated in Europe for addiction to pain killers. He has denied the allegations. The Jackson Family denounced Latoya as a liar, but lawyers for the 13-year-old boy said they wanted his estranged sister to give a deposition. "She saw checks to children's parents, and she knows apparently that Michael has abused other children. That's very significant," attorney Larry Feldman said on Los Angeles Television.

Patten throws down gauntlet to China

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten threw down the gauntlet to China by publishing an electoral reform bill Friday, part of his plans to bring greater democracy to the colony before the 1997 handover.

The bill, carried in the official government Gazette, contained only those elements of a wider reform package which Mr. Patten considers the least contentious. But China, which accuses the British governor of sabotaging negotiations on Hong Kong's future, is expected to react angrily.

After 17 rounds of talks stretching over seven months proved fruitless, the Hong Kong government decided to press on regardless with the first stage of plans for greater democracy in 1994 and 1995 elections without Beijing's blessing.

Mr. Patten, a former British cabinet minister whose style contrasts starkly with that of his Foreign Office predecessors, is expected to turn his attention to wide-ranging political issues when this bill is wrapped up.

The most thorny issue in any wider bill appears to be the so-called "through train" under which members of Hong Kong's legislature elected in 1995 would be allowed to serve out their terms past the 1997 handover, government officials say.

The bill to go before the Legislative Council (Legco) next Wednesday, its final session before the Christmas break, proposes cutting the voting age from 21 to 18 and abolishing the colonial practice of appointing members to district and municipal councils instead of electing them.

"Lowering the voting age will broaden the potential electorate from 3.7 million to 3.9 million," a government spokesman said.

The bill seeks to establish a single-seat, single-vote system for the 20 out of 60 seats in Legco which are popularly-elected and permit Hong Kong members of the Chinese National People's Congress to run for Legco.

At present, voters have two votes and each geographical constituency returns two members to Legco.

"The gazzetting today of the 'non-controversial' sections of the governor's political reform proposals will raise the temperature in the already heated argument with Beijing," the South China Morning Post said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Gore trip to include nuclear issues

WASHINGTON (R) — The Russian agenda of Vice President Al Gore's first extended foreign trip has been expanded to include nuclear issues as well as joint space exploration, U.S. officials said. Mr. Gore departs Saturday for an eight-day trip to Germany, Russia and the former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, both struggling to implement economic reforms. The trip, which includes talks with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, takes Mr. Gore to Moscow Tuesday two days after Russian voters elect a new parliament and decide the fate of a proposed constitution that would give broader powers to President Boris Yeltsin. "We have no desire to become involved in anyone's domestic politics," said one senior administration official who briefed reporters on Mr. Gore's agenda. "Obviously, we don't mind letting people know where we stand, however."

Rebels sentence Moldovan to death

KISHINYOV, Moldova (R) — A Moldovan nationalist was sentenced to death by a court in the former Soviet republic's breakaway Dnestr region Thursday, bringing furious protests from both the Moldovan and Romanian governments. The court in the rebel region's capital Tiraspol sentenced ethnic Romanian Ilie Iascu to be shot and jailed five other defendants for terms ranging from two to 15 years, with hard labour. They were all denied a right to appeal. All six were arrested in June 1992, when there was an upsurge of violence between Moldovan forces and the separatists, mostly ethnic Russians, who have declared a republic. The court found them guilty of "preparing and fulfilling terrorist acts and complicity to terrorism." The accused belonged to the Moldovan Popular Front Movement, which advocates unification with neighbouring Romania. The audience packing the hall jumped to their feet and cheered when the judge pronounced Mr. Iascu's death sentence, chanting: "Death to the Romanian terrorists." "Down with communism," Mr. Iascu shouted back, waving a small Romanian flag and making a victory sign from the metal cage on a podium where the defendants were held during the trial in a cinema. Moldovan President Mircea Snegur denounced the verdict.

Kazakh MPs approve presidential rule

ALMA-ATA (AFP) — The parliament of Kazakhstan voted itself out of existence Friday and granted President Nursultan Nazarbayev temporary emergency powers to save his embattled economic reforms in the Central Asian republic. Lawmakers voted to dissolve the Soviet-era legislature and hold fresh elections on March 7 to a new, smaller assembly after Mr. Nazarbayev charged that the old-guard parliament was unable to pull the country out of economic crisis. The move came less than one month after the republic introduced its own national currency called the "tenge" in a bold move that contrasted with its previous timid attempts at privatisation. Inflation soared in Kazakhstan as a result of the introduction of the currency and living conditions deteriorated, prompting hundreds of pensioners to stage protests in the streets of the capital in the past week. "The situation in our society today is explosive. Anything can happen," Mr. Nazarbayev warned in his appeal to deputies to adopt the resolution dissolving parliament.

'Rights crises overwhelming U.N.'

LONDON (R) — Human rights crises are overwhelming the resources of the United Nations, but it is still the only body aiming to represent all people equally, the head of Amnesty International said. "The United Nations is expected to deal with crises that are beyond its resources and are beginning to test its impartiality and credibility," Pierre Sané said in a speech on the eve of the U.N.-sponsored International Human Rights Day. The secretary-general of the international human rights group said there was no urgent need for action. "We are in danger of being overwhelmed by human rights disasters unless urgent and effective action is taken," he said. Mr. Sané told an audience at the London School of Economics that human rights were being "rolled back" in every region of the world. Governments seemed unwilling or unable to stop the trend. "As we enter the 21st century, the challenge of protecting humanity and the environment has become a global one. The problems transcend the nation state and so do the solutions." Increasing globalisation meant people were going back to religion, race and tribe for identity, he said.

Yeltsin backed by EC heads home

BRUSSELS (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin returned to Moscow Friday after winning support from the European Community for his leadership but with his people poised to deliver the only verdict that counts — at the ballot box.

The reformist president flew back from a three-day visit to Brussels with words of encouragement ringing in his ears from EC leaders ahead of Sunday's crucial elections.

Although Mr. Yeltsin in Brussels exuded confidence that he would win the "yes" vote he wants for his draft constitution, a broadcast appeal to his people back in Moscow suggested he feared the vote was in the balance.

Mr. Yeltsin left Brussels with a political declaration opening a new era in relations with the EC in the bag.

Addressing EC heads of state and government at a banquet on Thursday night, Mr. Yeltsin pledged that his vast, unruly country would purge itself of the vestiges of the Communist system to become a genuine partner in Europe's future.

More high-level N. Korean politicians dropped

TOKYO (Agencies) — Two North Korean politicians who had been viewed abroad as up-and-coming leaders appear to have lost key ruling party posts, Korea watchers said Friday.

Radio monitors in Seoul and Tokyo said broadcasts from Radio Pyongyang after Wednesday's Central Committee session indicated Kim Yong-Sun and Kim Tal-Hyon had been removed as alternate members of the party's executive politburo.

As usual in the murky world of Korea-watching, analysts could only speculate on what the moves might signify.

It followed close on the heels of news that Kim Yong-Ju, younger brother of "great leader" Kim Il-Sung, had been abruptly restored to full politburo rank after an unexplained 18-year absence from public life.

Analysts said Kim Yong-Sun, leading foreign policy specialist within the Korean Workers' (Communist) Party, and Kim Tal-Hyon, removed earlier this week as deputy premier and state planning chief, appeared to have been held responsible for a year of diplomatic and economic disasters.

Stalinist North Korea, already isolated diplomatically

after the demise of the Soviet Bloc, looked even lonelier in 1993 as its confrontation with the international community over suspected nuclear weapons development worsened.

Led by China, a number of countries with historically friendly ties to North Korea joined the chorus of voices trying to persuade the leadership to ally fears over its nuclear ambitions by permitting inspection of two suspect sites.

On several occasions, in votes at the United Nations or at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Pyongyang found itself alone against the world.

While the North angrily denies any wish to acquire nuclear weapons in defiance of international treaties, it says it will risk U.N. economic sanctions, even war, rather than allow access to the two secret military sites.

A stark account of just how this deep isolation is hurting the Stalinist state appeared in the communiqué after Wednesday's party plenary session.

The document said the nation was undergoing "a grave situation and grim trials" and partly blamed the collapse of its barter trade with the old

Soviet Bloc, which meant it must pay out scarce foreign exchange for oil and other vital imports.

In addition, it said, the economy was hard hit by the need for increased military spending.

"With the danger of a new war increasing on the Korean peninsula, we had to divert a big proportion of the economy to national defence in order to increase the defence capabilities of the country," the leadership acknowledged.

North Korea warned Friday that its dialogue with the United States cannot continue unless the U.S. side accepts its proposal for partial inspections of nuclear sites.

Since American officials have described the North Korean proposal as unacceptable, the warning appears to increase the likelihood of a breakdown in talks over North Korea's nuclear programme.

According to David Kyd, spokesman for the IAEA in Vienna, the North Korean offer made in New York last week would allow IAEA inspectors to change batteries and film in monitoring cameras at two key nuclear sites. But the inspectors could not check seals and monitoring sensors, Mr. Kyd said.

A North Korean Foreign

Ministry statement Thursday described the offers as "the largest concession on the part of (North Korea) at the present stage."

If the United States refuses to accept the offer, North Korea "cannot but form the final judgment that the United States no longer has the intention to continue dialogue," it said.

The statement was reported Friday by the official Korean Central News Agency, monitored in Tokyo.

The hardline position came after President Bill Clinton sounded a new note of pessimism Wednesday on the nuclear stalemate. Mr. Clinton said he hopes the United States can avoid a "full-blown crisis," but was not sure it would be possible.

The Foreign Ministry statement reiterated North Korea's stand that it is willing to agree to "full inspection of the facilities reported to the IAEA" as part of a "package solution" with the United States.

Such a solution would include a legally binding commitment by Washington not to use nuclear weapons against the North, said Ho Jong, North Korea's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations, in an interview this week.

Handwritten Arabic text at the bottom right corner of the page.

Sports

Senna gets off with 2 race suspended ban

PARIS (R) — Former world motor racing champion Ayrton Senna got off with a two-race suspended ban after admitting to an International Automobile Federation (FIA) hearing that he had struck Irish driver Eddie Irvine.

FIA President Max Mosley, announcing the Brazilian Formula One driver's ban to a press conference after a three-hour hearing, said Senna's attitude before the world council had been "impeccable."

Senna admitted to FIA he had punched Irvine during an argument after the Japanese Grand Prix at Suzuka on Oct. 4. The McLaren driver, who on the event was angry at the way the Irishman had hindered him in the latter part of a race.

Mosley said Senna would have his licence withdrawn for the first two Formula One races of the 1994 season but that the ban was suspended for 10 months.

"Senna recognised and admitted that he had hit him," Mosley said. "He was honest and fair, responsible and reasonable and we all felt great sympathy for him."

"But what happened cannot be allowed in the sport and he had to be a penalty," Mosley said. Television film showed Irvine had hindered Senna's attempts to pass him and an audio tape of

the post-race incident, recorded by a journalist, had showed the Jordan driver was provocative in the heated discussion.

"Irvine's attitude was extremely provocative and difficult," he said. "But Senna also opened discussions in a very heated way."

Eyewitnesses had said that, after a long argument, Senna struck Irvine with a left hook to the face and knocked him off the table he was sitting on. Irvine appeared before the hearing but Mosley said he was there as a witness and did not face any disciplinary action himself.

Senna has 30 days in which to appeal against the ban but Mosley said he hoped Thursday's hearing would mark an end to an affair which has clouded the end of the Formula One season.

Mosley said lessons had been learned from what happened on the track and that in future stewards would be instructed to penalise drivers who hindered the race leader from lapping them.

It is not the first time Senna has been in hot water with the sport's authorities.

In 1988 he was fined \$100,000 for dangerous driving after an incident involving France's Alain Prost, also at the Suzuka Circuit.



Brazilian Formula One driver Ayrton Senna Thursday leaves the International Automobile Federation hearing in Paris (AFP photo)

Rangers ready to make Golac eat his words

ASGOW, Scotland (AFP) — Dundee United manager Gordon Strachan believes that his Rangers' domination of Scottish football is over, but may have different ideas to his side's clash with the league leaders Saturday.

The champions are two points clear at the top of the Premier Division, unbeaten in 10 games and won 3-1 at Celtic earlier in the season.

But Golac insisted: "They will not continue to dominate the way they have. They reached their peak last season. Players are hungry and teams are catching up."

Forward Gordon Durie is seeking his first home for the champions following his double at Motherwell week, while United are without goalkeeper Alan

to form against Partick at Pittodrie.

Gary Smith should be back in defence after suspension, while Duncan Shearer and Eoin Jess will be the Dons' latest strike force.

Aberdeen boss Willie Miller said: "We've got to start scoring more goals. We should be hitting the target more often, and that's how the strikers will stay in the team and make my job easier."

Motherwell's chance to re-join Rangers at the top was washed out Wednesday, but the extra few days have helped Chris McCort and Dougie Arnott recover from strains for the game at Hibernian.

The Edinburgh side could have winger Kevin McAllister back for the first time in five weeks after a groin problem.

Raith, sharing second bottom spot with St. Johnstone, will be without striker Peter Hetherston for several months due to a stomach muscle injury, but player-manager Jimmy Nicholl could be fit to return at Kilmarnock.

Saints, already without many long-term absentees, have further problems for the home game against Heart of Midlothian. Paul Cherry, Allan Moore, Ian Ferguson and Gunnar Torfason are all doubtful.

Fashanu faces F.A. inquiry over Mabbutt challenge

LONDON (AFP) — Wimbledon striker John Fashanu has been ordered to explain the challenge which fractured the skull of Tottenham captain Gary Mabbutt before an English Football Association (F.A.) commission of inquiry.

Fashanu will sit down with Mabbutt and watch a video of the incident, in which the former England forward elbowed the Spurs defender in the face during a Premiership match, before the F.A. decide whether to take further action.

The ex-England centre-back came within a millimetre of losing the sight in his right eye and Spurs manager Ossie Ardiles asked the F.A. to investigate after match referee Keith Hackett failed to take any action.

F.A. officials wrote to Fashanu asking for his comments and in his reply he states: "It was a complete and genuine accident. There was no intent on my part to cause him any injury."

However, Tottenham's letter of complaint implied that Fashanu was in breach of the rule which relates to conduct "considered to be ungentlemanly, insulting or improper behaviour or likely to bring the game into disrepute."

The F.A. confirmed: "After reviewing the correspondence in our possession, it has been decided to appoint a commission of inquiry before deciding whether there will be any charges preferred."

John Fashanu and Gary Mabbutt will be invited to attend together with two officials from each club.

"The match referee and linesman will also be in attendance, and a video film of the relevant incident will be shown."

Meanwhile, Hartlepool's players have been talked out of going on strike by their union for Saturday's second division game with Brighton, after their pay cheques bounced.

Goalkeeper Tim Carter, the Hartlepool Professional Footballers' Association representative, said: "The game will go on. We've taken union advice and will play. But we want a meeting with the chairman as soon as possible."

Earlier Friday, the entire Hartlepool professional squad refused to train.

Carter explained: "If we worked on a building site and weren't paid, we would down tools and walk off. We're doing the same now. This has happened once too often and the players are fed up."

"We have wives and children to look after and if we don't get wages, we can't do that. It's up to the club."

Hartlepool are in financial trouble and due in the high court here next month to face a winding up order brought by the Inland Revenue for £98,000 in unpaid tax.

Stich beats Steven, Edberg ousts Ferreira in Grand Slam Cup

MUNICH (AP) — Brett Steven took the biggest paycheck of his career and went home. Michael Stich took the money and the victory.

Stich, the defending champion, came from behind Thursday to beat Steven 5-7, 6-4, 6-4 in the quarterfinals of the Grand Slam Cup.

Stefan Edberg, the No. 2 seed, also reached the semifinals, beating Wayne Ferreira 6-7 (5-7), 6-1, 6-0. Edberg never went past the first round in two previous Grand Slam Cup appearances.

Stich, No. 2 in the world and aiming for a rare and rich triple, broke Steven in the first game of the first set to gain the decisive edge.

Steven, 24, only gained a place in the 16-man draw when Richard Krajicek dropped out because of an injury.

Ranked 43rd in the world and a quarterfinalist at the Australian Open, Steven has

never won a tournament, but his earnings improved dramatically here.

By reaching the quarterfinals, the New Zealander picked up \$262,500 and nearly doubled his 1993 earnings. His total career earnings had been \$438,497, \$102,140 in 1992.

His highest previous payday had been \$35,000.

"The whole money — it is hard to understand what it all means," Steven said. "Most of the other guys in this tournament have enough money to last them for the rest of their lives."

"For me it's fantastic that it enables me to have a choice once I finish playing tennis of what I am going to do. I am going to save it," Steven said.

"I am thankful that I got in and took the opportunity that was presented," he said. "I lost to the better player on the day."

Stich did quite handsomely

himself. For reaching the semifinals, Stich collected \$431,250. Not bad for three hours of work spread over two days.

The German picked \$2 million for his victory here last year and his total Grand Slam Cup earnings now stand at \$2,881,250.

The \$6 million Grand Slam Cup is the richest tournament in the world and invites 16 players with the best record over the four Grand Slam tournaments of the year — the Australian, French and U.S. Opens and Britain's Wimbledon.

The players are seeded according to their Grand Slam performances.

Steven was relaxing in Bermuda last week, doing some off-season fitness work, when he was summoned to Munich.

But he upset Cedric Pioline in the first round and gave

Stich a difficult time before bowing out to the hottest player on the circuit.

He broke Stich to win the first set and fought back from a 1-5 deficit in the second, saving two set points before Stich served out the set.

But once Stich broke to lead 1-0 in the third, the German cruised home and finished with 14 aces, to Steven's three.

Stich, the fifth seed, won the ATP Tour World Championship in Frankfurt in November and led Germany to a Davis Cup Final victory over Australia last weekend in Dusseldorf.

He's already earned nearly \$2 million within the last month, not counting this event.

Ferreira saved three set points in the tiebreak to go one set up. But Edberg broke for a 2-1 lead and swept the next 10 games.

Santana in pursuit of cup and new job in Tokyo

TOKYO (Agencies) — Tele Santana has come to Tokyo not just to watch his Sao Paulo side defend the Intercontinental Cup against AC Milan but also to sound out his own possible future as Japanese coach.

Since he arrived in Japan for Sunday's match, the 62-year-old Santana has said he is interested in taking the job of Japan's head coach when his contract with the Brazilian club finishes soon — but only if the money is right.

"I don't see any problems for signing a contract when I come free next month," Santana told the Japanese media. "I would like to have good conditions if I take it."

Tahiti newspapers here have speculated that Santana, who managed Brazil's national side before going to Sao Paulo, wants over \$3.5 million a year to take over from Dutchman Hans Ooft who stepped down after Japan failed to qualify for the 1994 World Cup finals.

A spokesman for the Japan Soccer Federation acknowledged that Santana was one of several candidates for the job and said the federation might talk to him after Sunday's match.

All the speculation about Santana has rather overshadowed his players' purpose — to hold in to the cup they won last year by beating Spain's Barcelona 2-1.

On the pitch, Santana's highest headache has been finding someone to fill the midfield role which once belonged to pintado, now with Mexican club Cruz Azul.

Despite also losing Rai, who scored in last year's Intercontinental Cup, to Paris St Germain, Sao Paulo last month won the South American Supercup and became the first club to win the supercup and the Libertadores in the same year.

Ac Milan, the intercontinental winners in 1989 and 1990, are trying to shrug off the feeling that they are past their peak, despite reclaiming the top in the Italian League before departing for Japan.

The Italians have come here this year as replacements for Marseille, after the French club, who beat Milan in the European Cup final, were implicated in a bribery scandal.

Sao Paulo have no doubts about beating AC Milan. "We have already played 95 matches this season. You know how hard it has been," Santana said.

"We have been through it all and will be the world's number one for the second year in a row."

However, there was similar fighting talk from Fabio Capello as the Italians prepared for their third cup appearance.

"We are not going to wait for counter-attack chances," Capello warned. "We will be playing aggressively."

A member of the original Marseille squad who beat Milan to win the European Cup trophy, defensive midfielder Marcel Desailly, is set to play for Milan here Sunday.

The 25-year-old Ghana-born French international moved from Marseille to Italy last month for \$7 million.

Zamalek win African Champions Cup

CAIRO (AP) — A sudden-death goal by defender Ashraf Youssef Friday gave Egypt's Zamalek a 7-5 shootout victory over Ashanti Kotoko of Ghana and African soccer's 1993 Champions Cup.

The victory before 100,000 boisterous fans, after a 0-0 draw in regulation time, gave Egypt both major African club titles this year. On a penalty goal, Zamalek's bitter rival Ahli took the Cup Winner's Cup last Friday with a 1-0 win over Africa Sport of Ivory Coast.

A shootout was necessary because the first-round match in Ghana also ended in a goalless draw, leaving Zamalek without an away-goal advantage.

Both teams had two of their

original five shootout tries blocked. On the seventh, Kotoko goalie Antonio Manseh knocked away midfielder Ismail Youssef's soft attempt, giving Kotoko's Dooah Noah a chance to win the game and the cup. But his shot skittered to the left of the goal.

Zamalek's Ashraf Youssef then laid the ball past Manseh into the right rear of the net. Zamalek goalkeeper Nader Al Sayed stopped the tying shot by Kotoko's Said Youssef to save the victory.

The Egyptians dominated during the game, keeping the action mainly in Kotoko territory, but they repeatedly missed close-in chances.

Kotoko's Ouli Rahman drew a red card midway through the second half for a rough tackle.

Jansen vows to go for gold in Lillehammer

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Dan Jansen alerted the speed skating world with a record performance last weekend. Now he's sounding a warning for those who would try to deny him Olympic Gold.

"I'm going there to win, and I'm not afraid to say it," Jansen said Thursday. "I'm going there to do my job, and my best is the fastest."

Jansen set himself up as the favorite in the 500 metres by twice cracking the magical 36-second barrier last weekend at the Olympic venue in Hamar,

Norway. He owns the three fastest times in history, led by the astonishing 35.92-second performance last Saturday.

"To look up and see 35 (on clock) was something I had dreamed about for a long time," said Jansen, whose previous world record was a full tenth of a second slower than the new mark.

"He knows he can go a lot faster," said Jansen's coach, Peter Mueller. "There's a lot more in there — we're saying it for Feb. 14."

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA HIRSCH
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WHERE'S THE RUFF?

st-West vulnerable. South offered slam possibilities. Against five clubs, West led the king of hearts. With two sure losers in the major suits, the diamond suit would have to be established without losing a trick. If five clubs were going to succeed, Declarer took the ace of hearts, drew two rounds of trumps to discover the 3-1 break, then cashed the king and ace of diamonds. A diamond was ruffed low in dummy, but East overruffed for down one. Ruffing high would have been no better, since declarer needed a second diamond ruff to establish the suit.

Unlucky—not only did neither minor suit break evenly, but it had to be East who was short in diamonds and held the third trump for the game to fail. Yet five clubs should have been brought home, despite the lie of the cards!

Instead of going for the obvious diamond ruff in dummy, let's suppose that, after winning the ace of hearts, declarer were to cash the king and ace of diamonds and lead another diamond. Instead of ruffing, however, declarer discards dummy's remaining heart. Now nothing can stop declarer from ruffing a diamond with the king of trumps to set up the suit and ruffing the heart loser with a low trump, and the contract is no longer in jeopardy.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

PLO fighter dons woman's veil to escape

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (AFP) — One of the top PLO guerrillas on the Gaza Strip escaped from jail Friday disguised as a veiled woman. Yzad Karaman, 24, who led the armed wing of Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement in Central Gaza, broke out during the weekly family visits at the Hof camp on the Gaza City seafloor. Captured a year ago in a shootout with the Israeli army, Mr. Karaman is accused of taking part in anti-Israeli operations and killing suspected Palestinian collaborators.

Sweden sells Mogadishu hospital to U.N.

STOCKHOLM (R) — Sweden is selling its field hospital in Mogadishu to the United Nations for around 20 million crowns (\$2.4 million), the foreign ministry said Friday. Swedish hospital technicians will hand over to a Pakistani company which will take over the facility on behalf of the U.N. early next year. Foreign Aid Minister Alf Svensson said it was positive that the U.N. was taking over responsibility for the field hospital, set up one year ago, at a time when Swedish aid to Somalia was entering a more long-term phase. Somalia is due to receive 325 million crowns (\$39 million) from Sweden this year, some of it to build up primary health care.

3 wounded in car-bomb blast in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (AFP) — A car-bomb exploded in the Iraqi capital on Wednesday, injuring three people as well as damaging six cars and stores, authorities said. Police were "investigating and searching for the perpetrators of this odious crime," which occurred at 8:00 p.m. (1700 GMT) in a marketplace, the official Iraqi News Agency said. Two people were wounded when a car-bomb exploded in Baghdad on Oct. 20, with a government spokesman accusing foreign agents of being behind the blast. Five people were hurt, including one seriously, in a car-bomb attack on Aug. 4 in the capital, which Iraqi authorities blamed on Iranian agents.

U.S. objector applications rose during Gulf war

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of people applying for conscientious objector status during the Gulf war more than doubled but still barely affected U.S. military readiness, congressional analysts report. The General Accounting Office (GAO), the investigative arm of the U.S. Congress, said that the number of applications for conscientious objector status increased to 447 in the 12 months beginning Oct. 1, 1990. Of these, about 61 per cent were approved. In the three previous years, when no war was being fought, the U.S. Defence Department received up to 200 applications a year and approved up to 85 per cent of them. "While the number of applications more than doubled... the number was minuscule compared to the number of people in uniform (about two million) and the number of people deployed to the Gulf (about 500,000)," the GAO said. "The insignificant number... indicated that conscientious objectors had no measurable impact on the readiness of the all-volunteer force," the agency said. The GAO said that most of those who applied for conscientious objector status were young, junior enlisted personnel.

Thai generals linked to jewellery theft

BANGKOK (R) — Two Thai police generals will be implicated in a new report on the unresolved 1990 case of jewellery stolen from a Saudi prince, a parliamentary committee spokesman said. "Even a praetorian four (fourth-grade) graduate will know who the wrongdoers were after reading our information," Vichai Chaijavanitkul, spokesman for the house committee on labour and social welfare, told reporters on Thursday. The generals would not be named because it was beyond the committee's responsibility to do so, Friday's Nation newspaper quoted him as saying. Ties between Thailand and Saudi Arabia have been soured for years by the theft of \$20 million in family jewellery from a Riyadh palace by a Thai worker. The pieces were returned but the Saudis said 75 per cent were cheap fakes. Thailand's attorney-general has charged seven policemen, including the chief investigator, and three civilians with embezzlement in the case. But the missing jewellery has still not been returned. Saudi Arabia's envoy to Thailand and others have implied that more members of the police force may have been involved.

Lebanon unions prepare for strike

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's labour union confederation is pressing ahead with its preparations for a general strike next week amid a lack of communications with the government, a union leader said Friday. "If there is no contact between the government and the confederation, the general strike next Wednesday is definitely going ahead," the secretary-general of the CGTL labour confederation, Yasser Nimeh, told Reuters.

Bhutto visit boosts relations with Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto wound up a visit to Iran Friday which boosted economic and other ties between the two countries. "The two countries held broad discussions in an atmosphere of friendship" and have decided to step up political, economic and technical cooperation, she said before leaving for Turkey. She called on Muslims to close ranks to solve problems plaguing Islamic countries, mainly Afghanistan. Iran and Pakistan had decided to increase cooperation in the fields of oil and gas, with Iran planning to build a refinery in Pakistan. A gas pipeline could also be built to export Iranian gas to Pakistan.

Ms. Bhutto said she had invited President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to visit her country in 1994. No date was announced. Mr. Rafsanjani, who accompanied Ms. Bhutto to the airport, said the prime minister's visit was "successful" and Iran and Pakistan had become closer.

A joint economic commission would be set up to implement various agreements reached between the two Muslim states, he said. Bilateral trade stood at \$300 million in 1992, with Iran exporting mainly oil and importing rice. Trade between the two countries is expected to rise to \$500 million soon, according to official sources.

A declaration issued at the end of Ms. Bhutto's visit focused mainly on cooperation in foreign policy. Both countries called on various factions in Afghanistan to agree to a ceasefire and join forces toward rebuilding Afghanistan, ravaged by 14 years of civil war and one of the poorest countries in the world. Iran favours a tripartite effort — involving Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia — to end the conflict in Afghanistan, according to reliable sources.

The communiqué also called for an end to skirmishes at Tajik-Afghan border and asked political groups in Tajikistan to solve their differences peacefully.

The pro-communist Tajik government accuses Afghan factions of aiding groups in Tajikistan. The joint declaration also condemned the occupation of territory in Azerbaijan by Armenian forces and asked for international help to hundreds of thousands of Azeri refugees. There was no mention of the problem in Kashmir, a Muslim majority state in India and where Muslims have been fighting for independence since 1989.

In an interview published Tuesday in the English-language daily Tehran Times, Ms. Bhutto said her country would "welcome" Iranian mediation to end the violence in Kashmir. But India, which accuses Pakistan of arming and training militants in Kashmir, has rejected any third party intervention.

Ms. Bhutto, who had visited Iran in 1990 when she first became a prime minister, left here for Turkey.

EC leaders divided on growth plan financing

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — A European Community (EC) summit was divided here Friday over financing for an ambitious public works scheme to help pull the EC out of its recession and deepening unemployment crisis.

A spokesman for the EC's Executive Commission said the leaders were generally supportive of its package of proposals, including measures to boost competitiveness through labour market deregulation and wage restraint.

But Britain rejected a commission proposal for 48 billion ECUs (\$54 billion) in bond issues to help fund European rail, road, energy and telecommunications networks over six years.

Germany and the Netherlands also expressed reservations about the scheme, part of a broad strategy aimed at cutting the 12-member EC's 11 per cent unemployment rate in half by the turn of the century.

The economic crisis and plight of 17 million jobless Europeans topped the agenda for the two-day summit which opened as tens of thousands of Belgians jammed downtown Brussels to protest their government's austerity plans.

Efforts to nail down a world trade accord also figured prominently in the talks with EC Trade Commissioner Leon Brittan flying to Geneva Saturday for the final push before Wednesday's deadline.

British Prime Minister John Major fired the strongest shot in the debate over financing for the job-creating investment scheme expected to involve 120 billion ECUs (\$135 billion), with 40 per cent financed by bonds.

"It would be absurd for the commission to increase its borrowing when member states are taking severe action to reduce theirs," he said in a speech, adding that the private sector should take the lead in such projects.

He also dismissed the commission's target of creating 15 million jobs as a "meaningless" exercise that could under-

mine EC credibility, and objected to energy taxes proposed to offset any lowered social charges for businesses.

Mr. Major's attack drew an acidic response from a commission official who said: "I hope that the British realise that the tunnel under the Channel is not the only investment Europe needs."

Away from the summit, central Brussels was transformed by a sea of red flags and echoed to the sound of firecrackers as thousands of trade unionists protested against Belgium's austerity plans and undermined the challenge facing the EC leaders.

Diplomats said the leaders gave broad support to the ideas put forward in a white paper by European Commission President Jacques Delors, who has steered the community towards closer union during nine years as president of its executive commission.

"This white paper is a charter of the possible," a spokesman quoted President Francois Mitterrand, a fellow French socialist, as telling his colleagues. "This white paper is what I was waiting for to re-launch Europe."

Even Mr. Major spoke positively about much of the white paper, according to diplomats, toning down many of the harsher comments made to the television cameras in recent days and departing from prepared speaking notes.

But he took a tough stance against Mr. Delors's call to borrow and spend eight billion ECUs (\$9 billion) a year in new money from 1994 to 1999 to pay for the programme.

"It makes no sense for all the countries of the European Community to individually cut their borrowing and then collectively borrow in a new fashion through the European Community, and that is what we oppose," Mr. Major said before hearing Mr. Delors.

The Netherlands and cash-strapped Germany, the largest net contributor to EC funds, were also opposed to the idea of new borrowing.

Israel accused of 'crass' violation of human rights

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Security forces are still "crassly" violating human rights in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, the leading Israeli rights group reported Friday.

The Israeli information centre for human rights and B'tselem counted 174 Palestinians killed by Israelis during the sixth year of the intifada ending on Dec. 8. Forty-two were children under the age of 16.

That marked a 36 per cent jump in the numbers killed over 1992 and brought the Arab death toll from six years of uprising in the territories to 1,153.

The security forces continued to violate human rights in the territories "crassly," the annual report said.

The Dec. 17 expulsion of 415 Palestinians for "essential security needs" after six members of the security forces were killed.

"Not only did the deportation fail to improve the security situation, in its wake the number of those killed on both sides... increased dramatically."

"In the first six months after the deportation twice as many Palestinians were killed in the territories as in the previous six months," B'tselem noted.

"The security forces continued to use lethal force in non-life threatening situations."

The report went on to list "inadmissible methods of interrogation," the sealing of houses as punishments and a new tactic, "the use of massive firepower (anti-tank missiles) at houses during searches for wanted individuals leading to the destruction of the houses of dozens of families."

Some 66 houses were destroyed in the last year. However, B'tselem monitored a decline in the killings in the second half of the year a significant decrease in the number of detainees and less resort to curfew although Gaza remains under night curfew.

The report made no comment on the Sept. 13 signing of autonomy agreement, except to list the killing of more than 30 Palestinians and 14 Israelis since then.

Palestinians also killed 89 fellow Palestinians during the year on suspicion of collaboration, making a six-year total of nearly 800, according to press figures.

According to figures compiled by AFP the sixth year of intifada was by far the most costly in Jewish lives with 55 Israelis killed by Palestinians, compared with 39 the previous year.

Leaders had ordered a truce for the demolition, eager to give the army a helping hand on its way out of their lives. They knew the soldiers did not need to be there. Palestinian bulldozers could have pulled down the walls of cement-filled oil drums unguarded. But the army wanted to be seen easing the tension in the camp before the peace accord is implemented.

They chose block two, the "hottest" section of the camp. Its warren of cinder-block houses has long given perfect cover for youths to lob stones at vehicles entering and leaving the main army base nearby, hence the oil-drum walls blocking the alley.

The army base, with a fence six metres high and soaring watch tower, may be one of the first signs of the 20-year-old occupation to disappear by the end of the year.

"I hope so," said local elder Mohammad Okasha, who was offering advice on how to tear down a barricade.

Mr. Okasha, 72, fled to Jabalya in 1948 when the Jewish state was carved out of British-ruled Palestine. He still has the deeds to a farm just 200 metres north of the Gaza Strip in Israel.

Like most refugees from that era he lived in a tent before progressing to a corrugated iron shack. Eight years ago he built a cinder-block house.

He does not realistically expect to go back to his family property in Israel. He does not even expect to leave the camp under Palestinian self-rule.

"No money. People cannot move out even if they want to," Mr. Okasha said, echoing an opinion held by many.

Poverty here is less extreme than in the slums of Bombay or the favelas of Sao Paulo. But combined with repression by an occupying



Former British Prime Minister Edward Heath (second from left) Friday poses with the three Britons whose release from jail he secured in a meeting with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein (Photo by Yusef Al 'Alam)

Heath flies out with 3 Britons freed by Saddam

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Three British nationals flew to freedom Friday after former British Prime Minister Edward Heath negotiated their release with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in what was the first such high-level contact between the Iraqi leader and a Western official in over a year.

Mr. Heath, a member of the House of Lords, thanked His Majesty King Hussein and President Saddam for their hospitality and the travel arrangements they had provided for himself and the released prisoners.

Marking what is believed to be a turning point in Iraq's strained relations with the West, Mr. Heath's two-day visit to Baghdad included a two-and-a-half hour meeting with the Iraqi leader.

"I met with President Saddam as well as the foreign minister of Iraq and had a two-and-a-half-hour talk on a wide range of issues," Mr. Heath said during a press conference after arriving from Iraq with former prisoners Simon Dunn, Paul Ride and Michael Wainwright.

The three men, all convicted by Iraqi courts of entering Iraqi territory illegally, were held at the Abnaji Ghraith prison in central Baghdad before their release Thursday.

Mr. Heath said he could not reveal the contents of his discussion with the Iraqi leader, but said that favours were "not asked for, not offered and not given."

The prisoners and a British delegation headed by Mr. Heath were flown by helicopter from Baghdad to the Iraqi-Jordanian border where they were picked up by a Jordanian Armed Forces helicopter and flown to the Marka civilian airport.

British Ambassador to Jordan Peter Hinchcliffe and other British officials joined the families of the three former prisoners and a crowd of mostly British journalists to meet the released prisoners at the airport.

The families of the former prisoners had been flown in to Amman by the privately-owned Virgin Airlines at "no cost to the taxpayer," said Mr. Heath.

Mr. Heath's stress on the humanitarian need that exists in Iraq today and the "obligation" that the United Nations had to look into those needs echoed requests and themes of humanitarian missions working in Iraq for the last three years.

"I had my personal doctor with me and the released men are in good health. We met with the minister of health. There is great humanitarian need in Iraq," said Mr. Heath.

It is yet clear what the Iraqi government believes Britain will do to help get the U.N. economic sanctions eased, but Iraqi officials in Amman said Friday: "nothing is for nothing."

Two British parliamentarians visited Iraq last May but were not accorded an audience with the Iraqi president despite their known anti-war stand during the Gulf war.

Mr. Heath stressed that dialogue was one of the most important aspects of diplomacy and said he regretted that neither the British foreign secretary nor the

American secretary of state had met with senior Iraqi officials prior to the outbreak of the Gulf war. He also lambasted the current U.S. ambassador at the U.N. for refusing to meet with Iraq deputy prime minister Tariq Aziz on his recent trip to the U.N.

But Mr. Heath hinted that "considerable progress" was made by U.N. and Baghdad in recent months on the diplomatic level and said that a U.S.-Iraq dialogue would also begin soon.

"I hope that we can bring it about as soon as possible," said Mr. Heath.

Paul Ride, who was imprisoned in June 1992, said he thought he had been imprisoned because "it makes people talk about their country at a time when no one really cares about them."

Simon Dunn, who was arrested after entering Iraq illegally from Kuwait in June 1993, said "We always knew we were not there for legal reasons."

The three men said they had been moved around to several prisons before they ended up in Abu Ghraib. Michael Wainwright, a cyclist who was arrested in April 1992 after entering Iraq illegally on his bike while pedalling through Iraq Kurdistan on his way to Australia, said he was not mistreated during his time in prison.

Prison conditions were described by the former detainees as "basic."

The fate of the remaining Western prisoners, one German and one French national, were "discussed" by the British delegation. Their release could be "very soon."

Drogoul gets 37-month sentence

ATLANTA (AP) — The Atlanta banker accused of illegally looting Iraq \$5.5 billion was sentenced Thursday to 37 months in prison after a guilty plea that excluded the most serious conspiracy charges.

The 20 months Christopher Drogoul served in prison while awaiting trial will count against the sentence.

The sentence from U.S. District Judge G. Ernest Tidwell ended a case that at one time included allegations of a cover-up at the highest levels of the U.S. and Italian governments.

Mr. Drogoul's lawyer, Robert Simels, once tried to subpoena former President George Bush to testify in the case.

Mr. Drogoul, the fired Atlanta branch manager of Italy's state-owned Banca

Nazionale de Lavord (BNL), was originally charged in a 347-count indictment of masterminding a secret loan network that allegedly helped Iraq strengthen its military.

He pleaded guilty to 60 counts last year but withdrew the plea after a startling sentencing hearing in which he claimed to be a scapegoat for failed U.S. foreign policy.

Days before he was to go on trial on a revised 70-count indictment, he pleaded guilty in September to one count of wire fraud and two counts of lying to federal bank regulators.

Defence attorneys, seeking to limit the sentence to time already served, insisted at a hearing this week that Mr. Drogoul was a minor figure

who was only obeying orders. The government, maintaining Mr. Drogoul was the key player, sought a 6½ year sentence.

Judge Tidwell said both sides had blown the case out of proportion. He criticised prosecutors for overzealousness against Mr. Drogoul, but stopped short of accusing the government of misconduct.

The government resources dedicated to this case were disproportionate to the public interest and the defendant's culpability," the judge said. "Enough is enough."

Though Mr. Drogoul was "clearly guilty," it was "absurd" to suggest that BNL did not know what Mr. Drogoul was doing, Mr. Tidwell said.

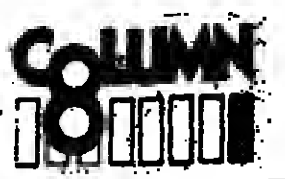
Like most Palestinians, he does not think the PLO-Israel deal should have let more than 100,000 Jewish settlers stay.

"The intifada was not really worth all the sacrifice for this peace...only for the peace coming from a complete (Israeli) withdrawal," he said, watched by a portrait of PLO chief Yasser Arafat hanging on his wall.

Jabalya is made up of hundreds of Ramzi Kaloubs — unemployed fathers who have to support whole families on a couple of hundred dollars a month.

If Mr. Arafat is to secure his place in history through this accord he must not only convince Palestinians like Mr. Kaloub that he can end the occupation. He must bring them jobs and decent housing, or Jabalya might once again become a cradle of revolt.

For Ramzi Kaloub, who lives with 17 family members in three small rooms, the intifada will only have been worthwhile if Israel with-



Charles, Diana pass separation anniversary

LONDON (R) — Heir-to-the throne Prince Charles and his wife Princess Diana passed the first anniversary of their separation as the nation pondered the future of the tarnished British crown. The anniversary of the official break-up of their 12-year marriage saw the couple carrying out separate duties and embarking on fast-diverging paths in life — Prince Charles preparing for eventual kingship and his wife for royal exile. Princess Diana, attending an arts award ceremony, bowed her head and bit her lip as she was warmly applauded and offered "love and support" in her planned retreat from the limelight at the end of the year. The couple are now exactly half-way through the minimum period of separation needed for a discreet divorce and the possibility of a complete break, has focused minds as never before on the future of the royal dynasty. A controversy about the links between church and monarchy, fuelled by attacks this week on the 45-year-old prince's fitness to be king, flared again Thursday with a report that bishops wanted to loosen official links with the crown. The Times newspaper said part of the Church of England hierarchy wanted to review the system under which the sovereign automatically becomes head of the church and "defender of the faith." One senior churchman, troubled by the idea of a divorced King Charles, this week openly questioned whether a man with a broken marriage and who was the subject of unflattering reports of an affair with a married woman was fit for the role.

Slain toddler's mother has premature baby

LIVERPOOL (R) — The mother of murdered toddler James Bulger, whose brutal killing by two young boys horrified the world, has given birth to a premature baby, family friends said. They said the baby boy was born 2½ weeks early and was in a hospital incubator in Liverpool in northern England. The condition of the 26-year-old mother, Denise Bulger, was good. Family solicitor Sean Sexton was not immediately available for comment but was expected to issue a statement. James was just a month short of his third birthday when he was abducted by two 10-year-old boys while shopping with his mother on Feb. 12. Robert Thompson and Jon Venables dragged him down a railway track, tortured him and battered him to death. Denise and her husband Ralph, were at a court last month to see the pair, now aged 11, detained "at her Majesty's pleasure," effectively a life sentence for juveniles, after being found guilty of abduction and murder. It was the second tragedy to strike the young couple. Their first baby, a daughter called Kirsty, was stillborn in 1988. Last month Denise Bulger said that if the new baby was a boy she would name him Michael James. She said then: "He'll never replace our first son but we want him to share the treasure name. We hope to have more than one baby."

Russian show has reptile-bird missing link

HELSINKI (R) — The skeleton of a tiny dinosaur which goes on show in Finland this week could be a missing link between reptiles and birds. The display's organisers said. The fossilised skeleton, between 15 to 20 centimetres (6 and 8 inches) long and up to 70 million years old is believed by some scientists to show a connection between dinosaurs and birds because of its structure. Despite feathers, wings, birds are believed to have evolved from reptiles. Scientists, lacking fossils showing the various stages of gradual transition, have deduced this from skeletal similarities. The skeleton has been put together from parts found in Mongolia's Gobi Desert in 1992, according to Heikki Lahelema, organiser of the exhibition, which is sponsored by Russia's Academy of Sciences. "It's unique and could demonstrate a development between the dinosaur and the bird," said Lahelema, who has helped organise 14 earlier exhibitions from Russia. "They (Russian experts) can say at least this is one of the missing links between the dinosaur and the bird," he said.